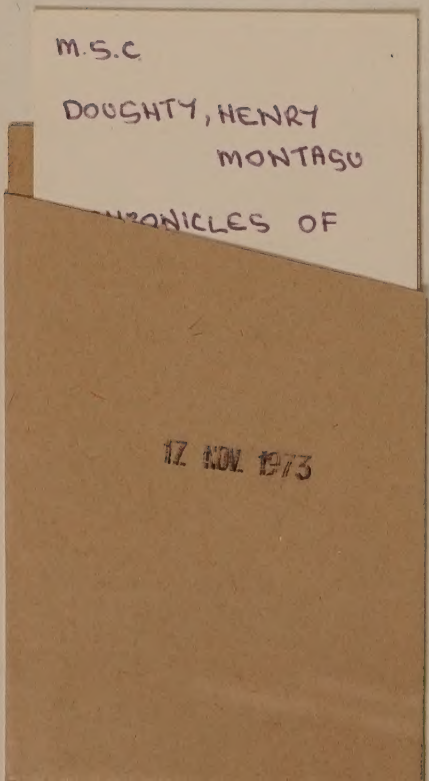
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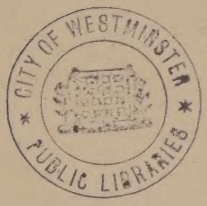
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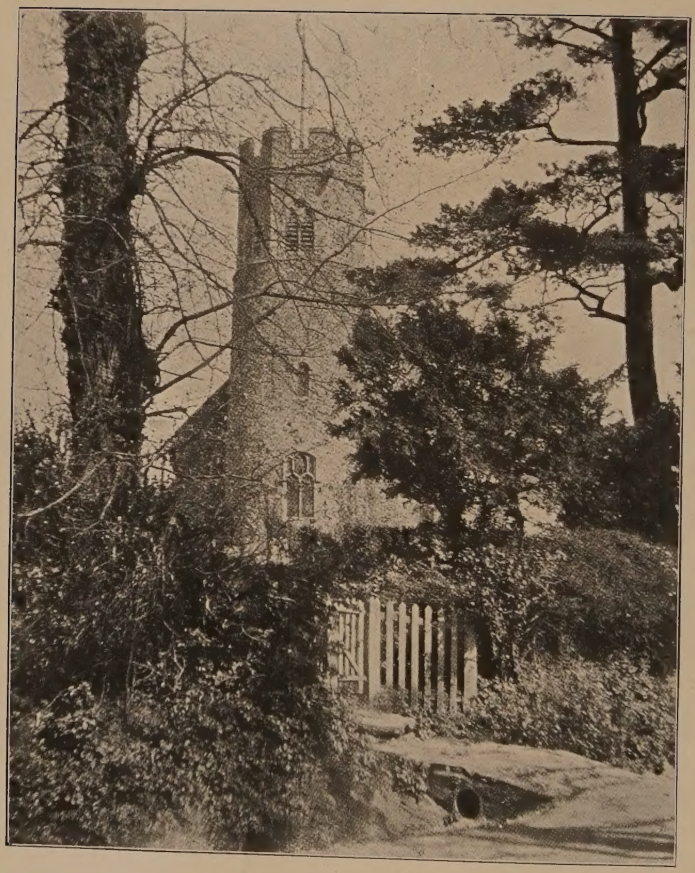


The Old Round Tower, Theberton Church.

CHRONICLES OF THEBERTON

A SUFFOLK VILLAGE

BY

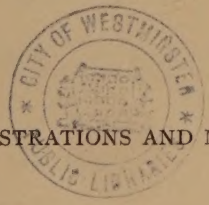
HENRY MONTAGU DOUGHTY

Author of "Friesland Meres," &c.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY

THE REV. W. W. SKEAT, LITT.D., &c.

Professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Cambridge



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TO MY FRIENDS IN THEBERTON

THEBERTON HALL,
April, 1910.

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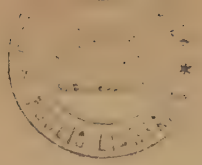
ERRATA

Page 26, line 6 from foot, for "Bedingfield" read "Bedingfeld."

Page 28, lines 2 and 4, transpose the words "hall" and "bower."



INTRODUCTION

By the Rev. PROFESSOR SKEAT

Our history is full of great events, and extends, since the time of Cæsar, over more than nineteen hundred years; but the more important part of it, considered as it affects us at present, is comprised within the modern period. Students of the history of our language usually consider this as beginning, for practical purposes, with the accession of Henry VII.; and it was near the beginning of the eighth year of his reign that Columbus discovered San Salvador. The events of the last four hundred years concern us therefore most nearly; but there is also much that we cannot rightly appreciate without some acquaintance with the laws, manners, and customs of medieval times.

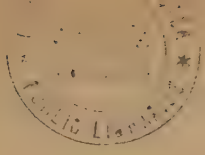
The law of progress has always involved great and important changes. Many of these, especially as regards the pronunciation of our language and the history of our spelling, have been so slight and imperceptible at the time as to have usually escaped much observation; but constant flux and steady movement produce important differences at last. One difficulty of watching events consists in the perpetual change of time and place; and it is for this reason that it is a partial gain—because it

affords us a steadier view—to eliminate one of these elements by making the place invariable. This is why it is often of much assistance to peruse the annals of a single parish, such as that of Theberton, in order to understand how it is fully subject to the general law, changing from day to day for the most part imperceptibly, yet not unfrequently even violently affected by the shocks of great events. It is extremely interesting to note, in the following pages, several instances in which even a quiet parish has passed through its trials. See, for example, the remark at p. 8, that "from that act of a pope, who died seven centuries ago, our rectors have still to suffer!" The "first prosecution of a poacher" goes back to 1299 (p. 10). In 1131 there was "a deadly pest amongst the animals, such as had never been in memory of man" (p. 11). And it was ascribed to the appearance in the sky of an exceptionally beautiful exhibition of the aurora borealis. Much interest attaches to the prices of wheat and bullocks in 1281 and 1288 (p. 22). A pheasant cost as much as a goose. In 1348–9 came the terrible Black Death, when "harvests rotted on the ground" (p. 24). Few of us realise, even in a slight degree, the many comforts of life which we moderns enjoy. Even the peasant may now protect his windows with glass; but the medieval noble, who knew but little privacy, often had to dine in hall, protected only by a clumsy hood, or not at all, from the horrible draughts pouring through apertures in the cold stone wall. "How women got on without pins is hard to imagine" (p. 30). There is a strange story about the arrest of the rector of Theberton in his own church,

whilst he was celebrating divine service, on Ascension Day, 1445 (p. 55). In 1528, we have the trials of two "wise women," who pretended to effect cures (p. 63); and somewhat later, of a wizard who practised divination by help of a sieve and a pair of shears (p. 65). In 1514, the new hand-guns were challenging the use of the bow; but the parliament decided in favour of the latter (p. 69).

These are a few specimens of the multifarious kinds of information to be here found; all within the first 70 pages. It would be easy to multiply them largely; but I hope enough has been said to recommend to the reader a careful perusal of the whole volume.

WALTER W. SKEAT.



CHRONICLES OF THEBERTON

CHAPTER I

It seems a far cry back to the days of William the Conqueror; but thus deep must we delve to find the earliest notice of Theberton.

When William felt himself secure in his saddle, the thought came to his mind to have a survey made of his new dominion. We learn from the most ancient book in the English language—the "Saxon Chronicle"—how the king spoke very gravely to his Witan, and that he sent scribes throughout England, to write what every man possessed in land and in cattle, and how much money it was worth; "no single hide, no rood even of land, no ox, nor cow, nor pig, was omitted." All these accounts were collected, and together form what we call the "Doomsday Book."

This old book—eight hundred years old—is still preserved; and in it are entries relating to this our parish which the Normans called "Thewardetuna." The Saxon name had been Thēod-beorhtes-tun, the "tun" or farm of Thēod-beorht, whence Thebbert's-tun, and dropping the s Thebbert-ton. Thēod-beorht was pronounced Tibert by the Normans, whence another form, Tibberton.

That corruption fell off, and Theberton, as now written, faithfully preserves the name of the "tun" as Thebbert" himself pronounced it a thousand years ago.[1]

Mentioned too, in "Doomsday," is the manor, which is still in being. It was old even then, having come down perhaps from Thēod-beorht. At the time of the survey, a man named Hubert held it under the great Robert Malet, of whom we shall read later on. In the days of Edward the Confessor, there had been one free man in Theberton, whose name was Suart Hoga, who held sixty acres under one Ulf, son of Maning Suart; and there had been one plough, and two acres of meadow land put at £1 a year; but William's surveyor found the plough no longer; the land had dropped out of cultivation, and the value had fallen to but 10*s.* a year.

The plough, I think, implied as much "earable" land as a team of eight oxen and one plough could work in a twelve-month, which might perhaps be one hundred acres. The present area of Theberton, probably much the same as in the Conqueror's time, is something under two thousand acres; so we must picture some nineteen hundred acres of natural country—wild heath, fen and forest, with, in the midst of it, about one hundred acres of clearing.

And as was this, so were the adjacent manors; each for the most part waste; and the wastes together formed a vast wilderness, dotted with oases, cultivated like ours of Theberton. Good harbour was there for wild game—red, fallow,[2] and roe deer, wolves, and wild boars, beavers, and perhaps bears. Herds of tame swine also, in the charge of Saxon swineherds like Gurth of Ivanhoe,

[1] This on the high authority of Professor Skeat, for whose kind help I am greatly indebted.

[2] Fallow deer are supposed to have been introduced by the Romans.

battened on beech-mast and acorns, as swine do to this day, during the pannage months, in what was then in fact as well as name the New Forest. Rude huts there must have been for herdsmen and ploughmen ; and no doubt near the sea, and on the shores of the estuary now the Minsmere Level, were other cots for fishermen, who, in wicker hide-covered coracles, used to go fishing for herrings.

Poor cabins all such dwellings then, though maybe neither cold, nor, judged by the barbarous standard of those days, quite comfortless. Bits of garden, yards they called them—we Suffolk folk call them yards still —were about them, and sheds, too, for cow or pony. Men built their own dwellings and sheds. Material was plentiful and nigh to hand, wood out of the forest for "house bote" and "hedge bote," clay under foot fit for daubing, and reeds from the nigh fen for their thatching. No roads worthy the name then existed, only rutty tracks here and there, worn by solid cart wheels, and paths, mere forest trails, for foot people.

There doubtless stood a church in our clearing, built by some Saxon lord of the manor, of rough logs probably, and thatched with reeds ; and near it, perhaps even touching it, stood an ancient tower.

Such towers were many in East Anglia, mostly placed either near the sea ; or by those first highways of an uncleared country the courses of rivers ; or near the great high roads, which the Romans during four centuries had driven through all obstacles. No quarriable stone is found in these parts for corners, so copying Roman work such as the half-round bastions of Burgh Castle, our Saxon ancestors picked flints from off the land, bedded them in concrete, and built their towers round. "Rounde maad in compas" were they, like the

"Tower of Jelousie," the mortar perhaps compounded like Chaucer's prescription:

> ". . . Of licour wonder dere
> Of quykke lyme persant and egre
> The which was tempred with vynegre."

At all events, one finds the mortar now as hard nearly as the flint stones. These round towers must have been the work of able craftsmen, so many of them still, after the storm and stress of centuries, standing strong as ever.

Like most of its compeers, our round tower of Theberton stands on a conspicuous site, put there to serve not only for a stronghold against sea rovers, but as a landmark too, and a lighthouse to guide wayfarers through an intricate forest. Afterwards, when men needed a church for worship, and to serve as a store-house for treasures, they built it close to their tower, in which they then hung bells. Our Suffolk towers thus came to resemble in their usefulness the noble Irish Round Towers.

Just when the primitive log church gave place to a better we cannot tell with certainty, but that the nave and the westernmost half of the present chancel were built not long after the Conqueror's time is probable; the north door is a fine piece of Norman, and an accomplished architect, my late friend Mr. St. Aubyn, showed me good Norman work as far east as to half the length of the chancel.

A church at Theberton, dedicated to St. Peter, was taken note of in "Doomsday"; and there was then a house for the parson, and glebe, perhaps the selfsame fields as now, computed at fifteen acres; acres were then uncertain quantities, there are twelve statute acres at the present day; the benefice was put at 40 marks or £26. 13*s.* 4*d.* a considerable income at the then value of money.

A year after his great survey, King William died in Normandy. In those days news travelled slowly, few of the laity could even read ; so our forbears in Theberton may have heard nought of the king's death till their priest from the steps of the altar—there were no pulpits then—announced to them that his son had been crowned at Westminster, and that he had given sixty pennies to Theberton and every other country church, for his soul's sake.

A masterful lord had been William, "mild" indeed "to those good men who loved God, severe beyond measure to those who withstood himself." "In his time," says the contemporary chronicler, "any man who was himself aught, might travel through the kingdom with a bosom-full of gold unmolested, and no man durst kill another, however grievous the injury he might have suffered."

It helps to bring home to one how different an England our far-away ancestors lived in, and how different they were from ourselves, when one recalls that even the language they spoke would at this day sound foreign to our ears. English has been so changed in the course of long centuries that we have to learn the old words—Anglo-Saxon we call them now—as one learns Dutch, by the help of dictionary. The parish priest of Theberton was no doubt a Saxon—an Englishman—and made his announcement in good English to English folk, but we moderns could not have understood a word of it.

One thing that old time priest, whose name even is forgotten, had in common with our modern parsons ; he was not forbidden to have a wife and family. Not long after it was ordered by William of Corboyl Archbishop of Canterbury and all the bishops of England, that priests should abandon their wives ; but the chronicler

adds that they all kept their wives just as before, and that by the King's permission.

Towards the close of Henry II's reign, in 1182, a house of religion made its first appearance on the borders of our parish among the swamps of the river Myssemeare. Now, the swamp is laid dry, but the walls of the Abbey church still stand upon an eminence rising above the green level as if still an island. Tidal waters did indeed ebb and flow round the desolate spot, when by a deed yet existing, William de Valleines gave land to the Church by the name of the "Church of St. Mary de insulâ." The Abbey was founded by a Suffolk worthy, Sir Ranulph de Glanvil, a great lawyer to whom our earliest law book is attributed, a knightly warrior, captor of King William the Lion of Scotland, Justiciary, Regent of the Kingdom, one of King Henry II's executors. His supposed birth-place is the parish of Stratford near our market town, Saxmundham. He died doing his devoir under Cœur de Lion at Acre.

By the twelfth century, the monastic virtues were mayhap declining, but Ranulph introduced a new order of special sanctity, a late graft upon the primitive stock of that father of monks St. Benedict. St. Norbert, founder of the new order, was Archbishop of Magdeburg, where travellers should visit his convent, spared by even Tilly. He settled his community first in the forest of Coucy, where a site was shown him by an angel, the *pratum monstratum*, from which, or from the Norman *prémontré*, comes the designation of his order. His Premonstratensian or Premontratensian monks who wore a white habit, were also known as white canons.

This house, the first Leyston Abbey, and its two successors on a different site, all stood close upon the borders of our parish. I have tried to tell their story

The Old Abbey by the Sea.

St. Mary de Insula.

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elsewhere, but it is so interwoven with the story of Theberton, that I shall have to repeat a little ; and some further gleanings from its archives will, I hope, add interest to this narrative.

In the barbarous days of old, we know our country was cursed with the blight of slavery. In our now free England, as in Russia but yesterday, and the day before yesterday in Mecklenburg, Christian men, women and children could be bought and sold like cattle. One class, the "villeins regardant," only indeed was attached to the soil, so that when land was sold they passed as part of it; a lower class "villeins in gross" being saleable independently, like any other merchandise.

Now for one document from the Abbey Chartulary. It is a deed whereby one Saer de Biskele granted to the church of St. Mary of Leeston [1] and the canons of the Premontratensian order serving there, two little woods in the parish of Theberton, and together with them one *Roger the Carter with all his following*—Roger and all his family, as "villeins regardant," thus passing with the land, like any other live stock upon it.

Take another charter, whereby the same man, Saer de Biskele, granted to the same abbot and canons a house in Theberton, and certain lands, of which some were held by Bernard Herell, *together with Bernard himself and his following.*

These charters give the names of the two little woods, and of the house of Saer de Biskele. The woods were called Uphalheg and Chiltre, and the house was known as Kaldham. And other charters deal with other lands, called Mikel Appeltun, and a wood Wimundesheg.

[1] Professor Skeat is of opinion that this place-name is derived from an A. S. form Lēastun—"the meadows farm." Henceforward, the several spellings of the name found in the several authorities for the time under consideration are used in the text.

Would we could identify them ; I have found a wood called "Childer wood," in a royal grant of 1557, but it is exasperating that this, as well as the other old names, have now dropped out of memory. We read also in the charters, of land then lying "*in morâ*," and of one acre described as "one very poor acre," in Theberton. Can it be that this moor of Theberton was the "dry common" of more recent times? As to the "very poor acre," of such acres ploughable by two rabbits and a knife, there are too many still on the east side of the parish.

The chief landlords in Theberton about this period were:—the famous house of Bigod, one William always referred to as the son of Alan, our friend Saer de Biskele, and lastly the Abbey and Convent of Leystone.

In the year 1200, we find that Roger le Bigod conveyed to William the son of Alan half a knight's fee—equal to six plough lands (otherwise hides or carucates) for the life of William.

In 1224, the Abbot of Leystone held lands in the parish, and, on an inquisition held in 1274, his holding then seems to have been thirty acres.

For Leystone Abbey lands no tithe was payable, as the estates of the Premontratensians had been then lately exempted by Innocent III ; and from that act of a Pope, who died seven centuries ago, our rectors still have to suffer! A statute of Henry VIII, having provided that persons who at the Dissolution should come into possession of dissolved Abbeys' lands should hold them as free of tithes as their old monastic owners had held them, has had this consequence: that 108 acres, 2 roods, and 17 perches in the parish of Theberton, formerly property of the Abbey of Leystone, are now held tithe free by the present lay owners. There are yet other lands besides,

in the parish, exempt for quite other reasons as we shall see later, from which our parson draws no tithe rent charge.

At that time, the law permitted religious communities to hold land, and estates had long been accumulating in their hands. The mischief of it was, that areas vast in the aggregate, became inalienable, a dead hand it was said laid upon them, which was against the interests both of the feudal lords and of the Crown. At last, the evil increasing, that great legislator Edward I determined to apply a remedy. A Parliament, summoned by him for that object in 1279, enacted that thenceforth none should sell, give, bequeath or exchange lands to any religious body without the King's licence. This Act, the famous Statute of Mortmain, however obnoxious to their cupidity, the monks had not dared oppose, lest some worse thing should befall them ; the mendicant orders had favoured it ; and on all his subjects, both lay and clerical, had fallen a great awe of the resolute King. This illustration is historical :—When pressing on a further Act, it came to the King's ears that ominous murmurs were heard in the Monks' Hall at Westminster. Edward would brook no murmurers. A knight, one Sir John Havering, sent by the King, marched into the Hall, and thus spoke he : "Reverend Fathers, if any of you dare to contradict the King's command, let him stand forth that his person may be taken note of, as a known peace breaker of the kingdom." Silence fell upon all ; only one man, William Montfort, Dean of St. Paul's, so greatly dared as respectfully to request an audience. It was granted, but, entering Edward's awful presence, such terror overcame the dean that he fell dead, so the record tells us, at the grim monarch's feet.

Soon, occasion arose in this little parish of ours to put the law in force. In 1289, one John de Livermere and his wife Matilda desired to grant a messuage and thirty acres of land in Theberton to Nicholas the Abbot and the Canons of Leystone, and for this they had to obtain, and did in fact obtain, a licence from the King. Again, in 1312, we find that the same John and Matilda, having, together with other persons, conveyed some lands to the Abbey without the King's licence, the royal pardon had to be sued for, and was, probably for weighty reasons, granted.

In 1299, occurred the first prosecution of a poacher I have found recorded. The Abbot of Leyston impleaded a certain man John, for trespassing and driving off the hares from his manor—the manor of Leyston. That same John afterwards farmed Abbey lands in Theberton. Since John's time such "*dampnacionis filii spiritu diabolico seducti*"—as, ages afterwards, Bishop Rede called poachers, have never been wanting in Theberton.

That abbot's successor, John de Glemham, acquired from John le Bigod de Stockton the right of free warren in the parish of Theberton, which enabled him and his monks, "lovers of venerye," to hunt beasts and fowls of warren—hares, rabbits, pheasants, partridges—over lands which did not belong to them.

Parliament, by the Statute of Mortmain had thought to bind the religious orders; but the fetters it forged, the monks snapped like pack thread. However strong the law, their ingenuity found means to evade it. Quite regardless of the Statute, they went on adding field to field, taking conveyances, not to themselves direct, but into the names of trustees for them. We are not without instances. In 1300 and 1305, one John

de Leystone, whose name we shall meet later, became such a Trustee (pro Abbate) of lands in our parish. And in 1345, Richard de Bunstede, and in 1357, William Scarlett and others, became respectively trustees in like manner for the Abbey. At last Parliament put an end to the practice by an Act of 1391.

One often hears it said what good times our forefathers had in these early Middle Ages. It is an idle tale, inspired by ignorance. The truth is that oppression and cruelty raged; battle, murder, and sudden death were too awfully familiar; agriculture was in its rudiments; no grain for food was imported; sanitation was not even thought of; and spectral shapes of famine, plague, and pestilence stalked through the land. Men lived in the darkness of ignorance, fear, and superstition; they imagined baleful portents in the heavens, and real calamities too frequently followed.

This by way of illustration: One night after Christmas 1131, people were awakened from sleep by a portentous spectacle—the northern half of the heavens lit up with burning flame! That same year brought a deadly pest amongst the animals, such as had never been in memory of man. It fell on cattle and on swine chiefly, so that in a township where ten or twelve ploughs had been kept (ploughing then was done by oxen), not one survived; and a man who had owned two or three hundred swine, had not one left. After that, the hens died, and flesh meat became scarce, and cheese too, and butter. The whole country suffered; Theberton cannot have escaped. "God mend the state of things when such shall be His will," prayed the devout old chronicler, a monk of the great Abbey of Peterborough. Simple, superstitious old monk! Celestial aurora borealis, bright and beautiful "Merry

Dancers"—how could he have regarded them as portents of calamity? I have met with no earlier case of swine fever and cattle plague.

Those were the dark ages indeed; yet through the mirk of them, and despite their distance, the concentrated lights of history enable us to discern a slow process of development. True, there were constant reactions, waves advanced, receded, but the tide was rising.

The status of the serfs was, from one cause and another, by degrees improving. The "villeins regardant" were commuting personal service for money. Their payments were recorded on the rolls of the manor, and, at last, copies of the rolls grew to be title deeds. One generation gained a bit, and the next a bit more. At first, the lord could at pleasure oust a villein who held, in the lawyers' quaint Norman French, "solonque la volonte le seigniour"—absolutely at will. But in time there came to be added, qualifying that formula, this other term, "according to the custom of the manor." The customs of the manor crystallised, precedent followed precedent, till in the end, the copyholder could eject even his lord, if he trespassed on his holding. The "villein in gross" too, slipped more and more out of the yoke of slavery, and stood at last on his own feet as a free labourer.

To each generation in our quiet village, change was, we may suppose, hardly perceptible; things would seem to go on much as usual. There were the two time-out-of mind authorities, manorial and religious. There never failed to be a lord of the manor; and one "person of the parish" succeeded another.

The manor courts were held, no doubt, regularly by the steward; for seldom would the lord himself preside; the suitors would know only the steward. A non-resi-

dent lord would be little more than a name. Of our manor the lord was non-resident and a foreigner to boot, but he—Robert Malet, Robert the Hammer, the Norman who had buried Harold by the sea-shore—was such a famous warrior, and so vast were his possessions, that when he tumbled from his high estate, his fall must have shaken the ground even of remote Theberton. Two hundred and twenty-one manors had he in Suffolk. A defeated rebel, he lost them all, they were forfeited to the King.

How long this manor of Theberton continued in royal hands I do not know, but not later than King John's time; for in his reign, and through the reigns of succeeding Plantagenets, on to King Henry V's time, we know it was held by Bigods.

They too, for a long period, were owners of the advowson. Probably, they held it as appendant to their manor; but, on such evidence as is available, I cannot trace its devolutions in their hands before the fourteenth century.

The earliest dealing with the advowson that I have found, was effected by an ancient charter, which is preserved in our great treasure house the British Museum. By this charter the same William son of Alan whom we have met before, granted to the Leyston canons the church of St. Peter of Theberton, which was then in his fee. Charters in those days bore no dates, but Mr. Jeayes, of the MSS. Department of the Museum, tells me that the names of the witnesses (Hubert, bishop of Sarum, and Radulf archdeacon of Colchester) prove that the deed was made between 1189 and 1194. The words of William's grant would seem sufficient to have passed the entire advowson, but I conjecture that, in fact, it passed only some lesser interest, perhaps a next

presentation. If the grant had vested the advowson in the Abbey, what more unlikely than that monks would, unless under compulsion, divest themselves of it; yet, though unluckily, there is a gap just here in our records, it is in evidence, that, not a century after the grant, the advowson of Theberton was in the hands of the Bigods. We know that in 1305, Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, presented one Richard de Dodyngtone to the Theberton Rectory; and from the inquisition, held in 1306 after the death of Earl Roger Bigod, it appeared he had held, besides half a knight's fee in the parish, "the church of Theberton."

In 1307, the advowson was in King Edward II, who had it, so we learn, by reason that the estates late of Earl Roger were in his hands.

The question arises—how they got into the King's hands. And this opens a window, out of our little parish into the world.

The facts are these. Edward the First had called upon Roger Bigod, his Earl Marshal, to lead troops out to Gascony. He would go cheerfully, he said, if the King was himself going, and would march in the van as was his right by birth; but if the King went not, he was not bound to serve in arms beyond the limits of England.

"No! I am not so bound," the Earl hardily insisted, "and I will not go without you."

"By God, Sir Earl, you either go or hang."

"By God, Sir King, I neither go nor hang."

The King did not hang him, but so heavy had been the cost of the quarrel, that it crippled the Earl; and in the end wrought disaster for the house of Bigod. Exhaustion of his resources drove Roger to borrow; he borrowed from his rich brother and heir presumptive, John Bigod. Whether the gossip is reliable that he planned to spite John for asking repayment we cannot

tell. But the fact is certain that the Earl did contrive this compact with the King: the Earl would surrender to the King, as his feudal lord, all his castles, manors, and lands, and also his titles and dignities, upon this condition: that the King should defray his debts; should provide him for life with a competent revenue—1,000 marks; should re-grant to him and the heirs of his body the titles and dignities of Earl and Marshal; and, further, should re-grant all the castles, manors, and lands to the Earl and Countess Alice his wife, and their issue, with remainder to the King himself and his heirs. Roger and Alice never had any children, so the compact worked out, that when Earl Roger died, the dignities of Earl and of Marshal lapsed to the King; and the castles, manors, and lands vested absolutely in the King also, subject only to a life estate in Countess Alice. The final result being that, not only was John disinherited, but the House of Bigod was stripped for ever, and beyond recovery, of all their great estates and dignities.

Soon after Roger the Earl's death, King Edward I died, and his son Edward II reigned in his stead.

In 1306, one "Lebygod" was, it seems, presented to Theberton. I guess that this name should be le Bigod, and that Countess Alice as tenant for life of the advowson presented some member of her late husband's family.

The benefice was soon vacant again, for in 1307, one John de Framlingham was presented, the patron now being Edward II, who again in 1312 presented Laurence de Rustene.

It must be presumed that not long after her husband's death Countess Alice had surrendered her life estate in the advowson to the King.

Between de Framlingham and de Rustene, an incumbency intervened of John de Trydian a Cornish

man. I suppose that the King presented him, I cannot say.

The rector who succeeded de Rustene was William de Neupert, who, in 1316, was presented by Thomas called de Brotherton, the then Earl of Norfolk.

This Thomas, a brother of King Edward II, derived his surname of de Brotherton from his birthplace, a village in Yorkshire. The King had created him both Earl of Norfolk and Marshal of England, and endowed him with the estates, which had been surrendered, as we have seen, by Earl Roger Bigod.

Thomas de Brotherton died in 1338, and was buried at Bury St. Edmunds; and, his only son having died before him, his estates, which included the Theberton advowson, descended to his daughters Margaret and Alice, co-heiresses, subject however to the dower of their mother Countess Maria, part of which was half of a knight's fee in Theberton. Ultimately, these estates became the sole property of the eldest daughter Margaret, who married firstly John Lord Segrave, and secondly the famous Sir Walter Manny. Her seal bears the style "Margareta Marischalla, Comitissa Norfolciæ."

All this, I fear, is of the order dryasdust, but the facts have to be stated, to introduce personages who, Margaret of Norfolk in particular, will take leading parts later on in our story.

It is on record that in 1339 an order passed, to deliver the advowson of Theberton to Lord Segrave and his wife Margaret the Countess of Norfolk. Lord Segrave exercised his rights, by presenting Bartholomew de Salle in 1349 and Roger de Eccleshall in 1351 to the Rectory of Theberton.

Sir Walter Manny presented Robert de Iselham to the same Rectory in 1361.

CHAPTER II

In 1363, Robert Earl of Suffolk, then patron of Leyston Abbey, built for the monks a new convent on a site more healthful than their island of the Myssemeare —an undertaking which doubtless brought work and welcome wages to the men of Theberton. That structure only stood twenty-six years, being burned down in 1389; and strong arms and deft hands from Theberton helped to erect, on the same site, a third Abbey, whose ruins we admire still.

In the meantime, had occurred an event noteworthy for our parish—the passing of the advowson of Theberton into the hands of the conventual house of Leyston. It came to happen in this wise:—

In 1372, Margaret Lady Segrave, Countess of Norfolk, then owner of the advowson, made a grant of it to the abbot and canons, in exchange for an annual rent of 40*s.* to be paid to her and her heirs; it being further provided that the Abbey should supply two chaplains to celebrate daily mass in the church of Theberton.

These terms were varied ten years afterwards, by another charter, whereby the Countess re-granted to the Abbey the 40*s.* rent, and released them from providing one of the two chaplains; in consideration of which, the Abbey on their part granted another advowson, that of

Kirkley, to the Countess in tail, with ultimate remainder to the King in fee simple.

From another charter of the same year, we learn the pious object of the lady's grant to the Abbey. Done into English the charter runs thus:—The Lady Margaret the Countess of Norfolk has given to the Monastery of Leyston in Suffolk the advowson of the church of Theberton . . . for the souls of Thomas de Brotherton, late Earl of Norfolk and Marshal of England, and of Lady Alice formerly his consort—father and mother of the said Lady Margaret, and for the souls of the Lords John de Segrave, and Walter Manny—and so forth.

The name of one rector I have omitted hitherto, I know not who presented him. This man, one Robert de Warham, became rector in 1330, and his next successor was instituted in 1349; so it may be that de Warham died a victim to the Great Pestilence of 1348—that awful plague known to after generations as the Black Death. In this one diocese alone there perished two thousand clergy; two out of every three parishes lost their incumbents; one-third, some say one-half, of the population of the kingdom was swept away. In London, no less than fifty thousand corpses were buried, in thirteen acres of ground called Spittle or Spital Croft, dedicated for that purpose by Sir Walter Manny.[1] How poor Theberton fared, no record

[1] Site afterwards of the Charter House. "John Stow saith that he had read this Inscription fixed on a stone cross some time standing in the Charter House churchyard: 'Anno Domini MCCC. XL. IX. Regnante magna pestilentia, consecratum fuit hoc cemiterium in quo et infra septa presentis monasterii sepulta fuerunt mortuorum corpora plus quam quinquaginta millia præter alia multa abhinc ad presens quorum animabus propitietur Deus. Amen.'" (Weever).

remains to tell us; we know that many villages were depopulated.

The year 1341 presents us with a record of much local interest.

Parliament, at the King's request, had granted him a tax of the ninth sheaf and fleece and lamb throughout England. It was firstly arranged, that the ninths to be paid by each parish, should be taken to be equivalent to the value of the tithe paid to the Church; and secondly (perhaps to avoid another assessment), that the assessment which had been made in 1293, the taxatio of Pope Nicholas IV, should be deemed the then value of the tithes; except where cause should be shewn why it ought to be more or less.

The taxatio of 1293 had put the value of the tithes of Theberton at the figure they stood at in Doomsday, *viz.* 40 marks. The ninths due from Theberton would therefore be £26. 13*s.* 4*d.*; but assessors would have to make inquisition, to find what ought to be either added or deducted. All this is premised, to make clear what next follows:—

"On Thursday, next before the feast of S.S. Perpetua and Felicitas, in the 15th. year of King Edward III from the Conquest," an Inquisition was taken at Dunwich before the Abbot of Leyston and his companions, assessors and collectors. Among the jurors we find local names, such as Payne de Halesworth, John de Donkwyk (query Dunwich), Jacob de Chediston, Richard de Denham, Alan de Henstede, John de Wangford, John de Thorpe; and witnesses to the Return were four parishioners of Theberton, whose names were: Richard Austyn, William Noble, William del Field and Robert Poer. The document, Englished, runs on:—"The

jurors say upon their oaths that the ninths of sheaves, fleeces and lambs of the Church (Ecclesie)[1] of Theberton are worth £10 no more; because there are in that place (*items of clerical income which, not being tithes of sheaves, fleeces or lambs ought to be deducted, viz.*) 13 acres of land of the endowment of the Church, which are worth 13 shillings, at the rate of 12 pence per acre; also half an acre of meadow, which is worth 12 pence (*this I take to represent the glebe*); also oblations for the three great days, with other small tithes, which are worth £4; also tithe of hay worth 40*s.*; also tithe of reed and rushes worth 66*s.*; also tithe of milk and calves worth 50*s.*; also tithe of flax and hemp worth 26*s.* 8*d.*; also rent 8*s.*; also gallin de apport (*query hens paid as rent*) worth 16*s.*; also tithe of turbary (*turf and peat*) worth 16*s.* 4*d.*; also two hundred acres of arable land in the same town which used to be cultivated, submerged by the sea, whence a ninth is worth 20*s.*" These items added together come to £16. 17*s.*, which deducted from £26. 13*s.* 4*d.* leaves £9. 16*s.* 4*d.*, the difference between that sum and the £10 being due probably to some clerical error.

Does not this old Return, apart from its intrinsic interest, help us to raise the veil drawn by time over fourteenth-century Theberton.

Then, the Abbot of Leyston was evidently a respected personage, not only within, but without the walls of his Abbey. The rectory of Theberton was then, as now, a fairly good living; for though £26. 13*s.* 4*d.* at first strikes one as absurdly inadequate, yet when one

[1] So it is written, but my own opinion, confirmed by good authority, is that the word Ecclesie was a slip of the scribe's pen, and that villæ was really meant. The word "town" is used in the record of a similar Inquisition for Framlingham, also taken before the abbot of Leyston and others. Hawe's Framlingham.

remembers that £1 then, would purchase as much as £15 or £20 now,[1] it is plain that the parson of 1341 received much the same in value, as the rent charge fixed for his modern successor at the commutation in 1838. A 14th century parson had "no incumbrances," and an income equivalent to £400 at least, besides a rent-free rectory, would suffice for his needs, with a margin over for works of charity and hospitality.

Judging from the arable portion of the glebe, the arable land in our parish was worth about the same as now, 15*s.* to 20*s.* the acre; enough hay was grown to yield a tithe of £30; reeds and rushes yielded more than half as much tithe again as hay—there were then great tracts of reed beds and marshes; there must have been a good head of cattle to produce £37. 10*s.* in tithes of milk and calves; enough flax and hemp was then grown in the parish to produce £20 in tithe; poultry was kept as it is now—perhaps, as now, it was the women's perquisite; peat and turf were used for fuel then and long afterwards; I suppose our marsh lands were always liable to floods; but two hundred acres of drowned arable land implies an unusual irruption of the sea.

So much we learn from this one local document. Let us try for a wider view of those far away times. Conditions widely prevailing may be safely applied to our particular parish.

Five or six hundred years ago, men had of course, as they have now, to earn their bread either by labour, or by handicrafts, or trade, and what margin they realized between earnings and expenses was the measure

[1] Authorities differ perplexingly as to the purchasing power of, say, a fourteenth-century penny. Henceforward, modern money equivalents, arrived at, following Professor Skeat, by multiplying the ancient figures by 15, will always be used.

of their comfort. We have therefore to look what wages were current, and what the prices were of the prime necessity, food.

Readers will be surprised to find such variations, as are well nigh incredible, between districts, between successive years and even months, and between one harvest and another. Factors, strange to us now, governed both wages and prices at that far distant time. We moderns have telegraphs, newspapers, good roads, railways, steamers; labour and merchandise can seek for and find markets at great distances; communications are easy, and transport cheap. Quite otherwise were fourteenth-century conditions; labour and products of labour were rooted to one spot, and there, any surplus was dammed up, and could not flow to supplement shortage in another locality. Another factor to be reckoned with was the system, then moribund but not yet dead, of villeinage, which kept workmen at home; and their predial services affecting the price of labour. The following figures I offer for what they may be worth :—

In 1281, the price of wheat was 63*s.* 9*d.* the quarter, of barley 53*s.* 1½*d.*, of peas, 35*s.* 7½*d.*; a bullock sold for 63*s.* 9*d.*, the price of a quarter of wheat. Wages ruled as follows: for threshing wheat per quarter 3*s.* 9*d.*, barley 1*s.* 10½*d.*, peas half a crown, for cutting fire wood —coals were not in use then—the pay was half a crown. Land let as follows: arable land 5*s.* to 10*s.*, meadow or mowing land at the enormous rent relatively of £3 the acre.

Seven years afterwards, in 1288—1289, we find corn was cheaper, wheat 50*s.* the quarter—this in London; in other parts—a good illustration of how difficult was transport—25*s.*, 20*s.*, 15*s.*, 10*s.* Barley was 7*s.* 6*d.*, and

oats 5*s.* the quarter. Prices of poultry and of game are remarkable ; a fat cock or two pullets fetched 1*s.* 10½*d.*, a goose 5*s.*, a partridge 1*s.* 10½*d.*, a pheasant—no artificially reared pheasants then, there are too many now—was 5*s.*, a heron—thought not eatable now—fetched 7*s.* 6*d.*, a swan—a state dish for banquets—no less than 45*s.*, a crane—one sees them in Germany but they are extinct here—15*s.*, two woodcocks 1*s.* 10½*d.* These game birds were all got by the sport of hawking, caught in ingenious nets, or now and then, perhaps, brought down by an archer's "bird bolt."[1] Early lambs were reckoned delicacies, for between Christmas and Shrovetide a fat lamb fetched £1, but only 5*s.* at other times.

Natural variations of seasons—bad seasons not mitigated by any skill of husbandry—wrought violent cruel fluctuations in the price of wheat. Happily for poor folk, mixtures of oats, tares, peas, rye and barley —bulmong, meslin and dragel, and not wheat, formed the chief part of their diet. In 1315, 1316, and 1317, wheat sold for £15, £24, £33, the quarter! In the last of those years when it stood at £33, we read "wheat was excessive scarce"—It must have been!

In 1336, harvests were abundant, and as the King, Edward III, was then commandeering all the cash he could squeeze from his subjects, to pay for his wars in France and Scotland, buyers of wheat were few, and prices fell ; the grain sold in London at 30*s.* the quarter. That year, men bought a fat ox for £5, a fat sheep for 7*s.* 6*d.* or 10*s.* at the highest, a fat goose for 2*s.* 6*d.*, and a pig (weight not stated) for fifteen pence!

1347 saw corn first imported into England.

[1] The earliest notice I have found of guns used for fowling with small shot is a Bill to regulate shooting with "hand guns and hail shot," passed in 1548. Shooting flying was not practised, I think, before the first quarter of the 18th century.

In 1348, there occurred, so we read, "such a conjunction of Saturn with the other planets as could not be more than once in a thousand years—a prodigy portentous of calamity; it actually was followed by the horror of the Black Death. During that dreadful year, a general panic prevailed; the business of the world fell out of gear; labourers would not work; employers would not, could not pay; villeins of both classes deserted their manors, and turned tramps and vagrants; robbery and violence were rampant; landlords were forced to abate half their rents. Things were sold for next to nothing, a horse worth £30 for but £5, a good fat ox £3, a cow 15*s.*, a heifer or steer 7*s.* 6*d.*, a fat sheep 5*s.*, a ewe 3*s.* 9*d.*, a lamb 2*s.* 6*d.* Wool, principal produce of the kingdom, fell to 11*s.* 3*d.* the stone; it was thought that it carried infection, "men were not only afraid of the cattle dying but of their own deaths, for otherwise wool need not have been so cheap." Harvests rotted upon the ground, and sheep and cattle, Mr. Green tells us, strayed through the standing corn, and there were none left to drive them.

Next year, the pestilence and panic were declining, and we read that corn and other provisions were already plentiful; wheat again sold, as in the good year of 1336, at 30*s.* the quarter.

Ten years later, 1359, the price per quarter rose to £20.

In 1361 when:

> "Beches and brode okes were blowen to the grounde"
> And "torned upward ther tailles,"

and the spire of Norwich Cathedral was blown down, and the second great pestilence smote the country, wheat fell again to 30*s.* the quarter.

In 1369, there was so great a dearth that the grain sold at £18 (another chronicler says £15), barley at £12. 5*s.*, and oats at £6 the quarter.

For 1379, we find wheat at £3, a price which now would make both farmers and landlords happy. It was then thought so cheap, that the low price was urged by the Commons as a good argument for refusing Supply. Barley that year was 30*s.* the quarter and peas 15*s.*

In 1389, wheat was quoted the same, but barley dearer at £2. 5*s.* the quarter, and oats were worth 30*s.*

To show what Suffolk farming was like in the 14th century, Sir John Cullum's researches prove that in the years 1386–1388, upon a farm cultivated as well or better than the average, sixty-one acres sown with wheat produced no more than seventy quarters; how would that suit our modern agriculturists? The cost of threshing then, was for wheat 5*s.*, and for other grain 2*s.* 6*d.* the quarter. The harvest wage of a reaper was 5*s.* a day; cutting and tying three acres of wheat cost £1. 8*s.* 9*d.*, "per taskam"—by piece work. Meadows, in 1389, were mown for 7*s.* 6*d.* the acre, and people weeding corn earned half a crown a day.

1390 again was a year of great scarcity. At Hawsted, Sir John Cullum says, the yield for an acre was less than six bushels of wheat, twelve bushels of barley, the same of peas, and five bushels of oats. Prices rose, wheat fetched £10, barley £4. 2*s.* 6*d.*, oats £5, peas £6 the quarter. Wool fetched 45*s.*, 30*s.*, and down to 25*s.* the stone; this, it is true, compares well with the Black Death year; but the price was considered low, and the law blamed, by which exportation was forbidden. And we find these wages quoted:—for carters and ploughmen £7. 10*s.* a year, shepherds 5*s.* more.

Those of us who have passed say their half century,

have seen the standard raised both of human comfort, and also, one regrets to note, of self-indulgent luxury. The change in one's own lifetime is quite apparent. Great then must be the difference between our standard now, and that of men removed so far from us as by twenty generations. What seems to us no more than ordinary comfort, would have been to our forefathers and foremothers of that old time unheard of luxury.

To speak first of houses, and first of all, the houses of great folk. Before the 13th century, these were built of rubble, flints bedded in mortar. Some—the strong houses of the Jews, and others it is said copied from them —were of hewn stone ; the house of Aaron of Lincoln is a surviving example. After that, the fashion came in for timber-framed houses, and not until the 14th century did builders from the Continent initiate us into the art, forgotten since the Roman times, of brick building.[1]

In England, the first case of brick building I have read of was a wall which, Stowe says, Ralph Stratford Bishop of London built round that graveyard which, as we have seen, Sir Walter Manny gave for the victims of the Black Death. Oxburgh Hall in the neighbour shire of Norfolk, ancient seat of the ancient family of Bedingfield, was built of brick in Henry the Fourth's reign. At our east country University, we first hear of brick building in 1449. Roof tiles indeed are mentioned so far back as 1189, when Henry Fitzalwayne, the mayor of London, ordered that houses within the city should be roofed with "brent

[1] It had been practised earlier on the Baltic shores of North Germany, where there is no quarriable stone. For instances : the Dom of Lübeck dates from the twelfth century ; that age-worn house, the Alte Schule at Wismar, from 1300 ; the strange gates of Neu Brandenburg from 1306 ; and the art was known also in the Netherlands.

tyle," instead of straw or reeds. In country places however, few, even great, houses, whether of stone, rubble, or timber-framed, or of the early brick building, had other covering than thatch.

In even great houses "chambers with chymneyes" were still uncommon; "then we had none but reredosses, and our heads did never ake." The rooms were dark, cold, and draughty. In place of clean carpets, floors were littered with straw, or with rushes seldom removed, covering miscellaneous nastiness, spilled grease, and half-gnawed bones and scraps. Few, even good, houses could boast of inside staircases; upper floors were reached by an outside step-ladder, protected only by a pent-house roof. The beds and the bedrooms of the lower middle classes were beneath the standard of our modern prisons. Harrison wrote generations later, in the civilized days of great Elizabeth; his words may often need a grain of salt with them, but we cannot be very wrong in applying his description to the earlier ruder times that we are dealing with. "People," he says, slept on rough straw pallets, or "mats covered onlie with a sheet, under coverlets of dogswain or hopharlots, a good round log under their heads instead of a bolster . . . . as for servants, if they had anie sheet above them it was well, for seldom had they anie under their bodies, to keep them from the pricking straws that ran through the canvas of the pallet and rased their hardened hides."

The homes of poor folk were deplorable, damp and dark huts, the floors of earth, the walls of clay daubing, no upper rooms, branches in the rough for rafters, roofs thatched with straw or with rushes, unglazed holes for windows—glass was too costly for any but rich houses. Chaucer—of East Anglian extraction—describes such a home from his own observation. It was divided into,

what with poet's licence, he calls "a hall" and "a bower." In the hall lived and slept a mother and her two daughters, and pigs and poultry made themselves happy in the bower. It disgraces our times that human lairs like that are yet found in remote corners—the cabins of Galway, and the "but and ben" cots of the Western Islands, for example.

Writers of mediæval romances paint ideal pictures of mail-clad knights and men at arms, to whom they attribute not only a fanciful code of chivalry, but likewise huge bodily strength and heroic stature. Fighting men, trained from youth upward in feats of arms and horsemanship, were doubtless both strong and agile; they may have leaped, as it is said, to their saddles, sheathed in weighty armour, without putting foot in stirrup. A man of gentle birth would have lost caste, if not adept at such knightly exercises. To-day, of course, personal prowess is not essential, we are not trained for hand to hand fighting, and so, some people think the manhood of our time has degenerated. My humble opinion however, is that the physique of Englishmen, except those born and bred in urban slums, is as good as ever. I once asked the hall-keeper at Penshurst, an ex-soldier of rather below average stature, if he could wear the old armour, and I have put the like question to a beefeater at the Tower. "No!" was the answer in both these cases; hardly any suit of armour was big enough.

There was a barbarous show of magnificence, as witness old Froissart's delightful descriptions, but it is undeniable that domestic habits even of nobles and gentles were gross, and that manners, albeit ceremonious, were coarse. A man of the upper classes would take his own knife in a sheath to a dinner party, sit there

with his hat on, use his fingers for fork,[1] and dip his unwashed spoon for each mouthful into a common dish. The diet of even wealthy people was unwholesome, too much salt meat, not vegetables enough ; while the food of our poorer folk was both bad and insufficient, and leprosy and scurvy were rife among them.

The dress of the mediæval rich was extravagant.

> Long beards heartless,
> Painted hoods witless,
> Gay coats graceless,
> Make England thriftless.

was contemporary satire. The middle and lower classes were fretted by harsh sumptuary laws ; no working woman, for instance, dared to be seen at church wearing other headgear than a hideous cap of wool, on pain of her husband forfeiting half his week's wages.

Society had not attained that stage of development which results in elaborate organisation and division of labour and function. A family did not then depend for its daily needs on purveyors, such as the butcher and baker, nor even on tailors or dressmakers ; each household was, far more than now, self-sufficing, independent of outsiders.

For the lord of the manor's house, his folds, and farmyards, and gardens, furnished a plain table ; and deer park, dove house, and warren more delicate dishes ; fish ponds provided for fast days ; while woods, fen and heath lands supplied kindling, billets, peat, and turf for fuel. The farmer again, and his men made their own implements, and their wives and daughters baked bread,

[1] That forks had not come into general use even in the 17th century, all who have seen a great picture in the Ryks Museum at Amsterdam have evidence. In the "Schutters maaltyd" (Civic guard banquet), painted in 1648 by Bartholomew van der Helst, the officers are shown eating without the aid of forks.

brewed beer, spun wool, wove cloth, made, not only their own garments, but also the smock frocks (worn from King John's days to our own) for their men folk. How women got on without pins is hard to imagine. They only had skewers of wood, bone, or silver, and tied their clothes with tags and laces. When pins came in, they were so much thought of, that a wife's allowance was called her pin-money. In Henry the Eighth's time "an acte for the true making of pynnes" ordained that the price of pins should not exceed 6*s.* 8*d.* a thousand—more than a penny of our money for each pin.

Our paid professional army relieves civilians now from personal service, but had we lived in the thirteen hundreds we should often have seen a man impressed from Theberton.

In 1315, Parliament granted to the King, in aid for his war in Scotland, from every village in England one stout foot-man. These men were armed with swords, bows and arrows, slings and lances, and every village had to pay for its own man's armour, and also for his expenses of getting to his rendezvous and of food for sixty days thereafter, at the wage of 4*d.*, or in modern money 5*s.* a day. War in Scotland was then of course foreign service.

For home defence, adequate means had long before been provided; even the far distant 12th century showing, in that respect, a beacon, an example, to ourselves. By the Assize of Arms of 1181, all Englishmen of an age fit for war, were bound to serve in defence of home and country. Such vital matters were not then the shuttlecocks of partisan politicians.

In the thirteen hundreds, surnames were slowly coming into common use; it was a natural process, thus Jack the Smith, developed into John Smith, and the sons of

other Johns came to be called Johnsons. Welshmen concocting English names either prefixed a P, for *ap*—son of, as P-richard son of Richard, or affixed s for son, as Jone-s son of John, Evan-s of Evan. Our women workers too were the mothers of names; a female brewer for instance was then called a brewster, a female weaver a webster, whence those surnames yet among us. A local example occurs from the rolls of the adjacent manor Fordley; the grant of a house in 1354 from one Robert le Coupere to Geoffrey le Draper—Cooper and Draper are common names now.

Though our language has altered much in the course of ages—not so much in Suffolk however as elsewhere—place-names of quite obscure localities have suffered little change. For instance the Packway, a narrow lane in Fordley, worn deep by the traffic of countless generations, bore the same name certainly in the 15th century, probably for centuries earlier. The Fordley manor rolls which are perfect, and in perfect preservation, from the thirteen hundreds, record that Robert Grosse, weaver by trade, held in the twenty-first year of Edward IV a piece of land called Fordeland, lying by "le Packewaye" in the same place, leading from Kelsale to Dunwich. Only one stretch of this old "pedders[1] way" is left, though it might perhaps still be traced along a "via chasea," a cattle driving way—we call them drift ways in Suffolk—which leads from the Fen Farm in Middleton to the marshes, and probably once crossed the old river, and led on over Westleton walks to Dunwich.

My neighbours may perhaps identify other places in Middleton-Fordley, such as the Chapel Croft; Magg's Bridge, seemingly not far from Stone Hill; Slade Mere,

[1] Weever says, but his derivation is doubtful, that pedders ways were so-called "quod pedes iter conficiunt."

a parish boundary; Ton Mere (Town Mere) another parish boundary on the Theberton side. The "pinfold domini," lord's pound, was probably on the same site as the pound I remember on Middleton Moor. The king's highway, "via regia,'" afterwards the turnpike between Theberton and Yoxford, was in 1367 known as Medow Lane. It traversed meadows then; and its grassy margins must then have been wider, as, after the statute of Winchester of 1285, no brushwood was allowed to grow within two hundred feet on either side of roads, for fear of sheltering robbers. The lord of the manor had a park in Fordley, referred to on the rolls as "le parke" and as "parcus domini." Upon the present Dovehouse Farm, perhaps, stood the manorial dovecote, whence the lord's tame pigeons were privileged to raid other men's crops.

CHAPTER III

FOR even slight parish sketches, we sorely need foreground figures. Without figures, almost any picture lacks interest, and for historical subjects they are not less than essential. Houses, habits, manners, language, all help us with, as it were, a background ; but we want life ; we want to see men and women, the "him and her," who, twenty generations back, lived, walked, and talked in this village of Theberton. This I could never have supplied, but happily, a word-smith, a poet, himself an eye-witness, has left us his masterpieces of description.

Geoffrey Chaucer, father of English Poetry, we are proud to claim for Suffolk, as descended from an Ipswich family[1] ; and it is very probable that his immortal characters, so fresh, so vivid in colour, so obviously likenesses, were drawn from Suffolk friends and relations. They may well stand at all events for types of such people as he might have met, any day at Theberton.

In the days we are describing, no figures were more familiar in our parish, than the monks of Leyston. Theberton folk assisted at their choral services, and

[1] See "The Chaucers of Suffolk," an article by Mr. V. B. Redstone in *Memorials of Old Suffolk*, edited by him. I have to thank Mr. Redstone for friendly help.

admired their frequent processions, saw work-a-day brothers labouring at harvest, and, now and then, perhaps a gay abbot, riding with hawk on wrist, or following hounds, over the unfenced open fields, privileged by his right of free warren.

A canon of the church indeed, forbade clerics to hunt with hawk or hound "*voluptatis causâ*," but—fine the distinction—it was permitted them if "*recreationis aut valetudinis gratiâ*," a bit of subtlety which monks would delight in, and not fail to take full advantage of.

The neighbourhood was not without gentle families. In 1437, an Inquisition was held at Benhall, a neighbouring parish, after—and a strangely long time after—the death of one William Leyston, who had died in 1365.

William Leyston had had a daughter Margery, married to John Bokele. They had a son William, whose son again was John Bokele. This younger John had a daughter named Maud. Maud Bokele married John Jenney,[1] and they had a son named William.

The Inquisition found that William Leyston had died seised in tail of the Manor of Wadehalle, with its appurtenances in Leyston, Theberton, Middleton, Fordley, Aldringham, Knoddishall, Buxlow [2] and Friston, by the gift of his father John de Leyston, who was I think the man who had acted as a trustee for the Abbey; and it was further found that one of his next heirs was the above-named William Jenney; son of Maud and John Jenney.

[1] In Knoddishall Church near Leiston, Weever noted this inscription: "John Jenney Esquyer, Matylda (Maud) daughter of John Bokele Esquyer and Margery his wyves which John dyed Mcccclx."

[2] Slight remains of the round tower of Buxlow Church may be found in the garden of a cottage near Knoddishall Red House.

Thus it appears that William Jenney inherited estates in Theberton from William Leyston, and through him from John de Leyston, who had been born in Edward I.'s time.[1]

The Bokeles we shall meet again later. For many years I shot with friends through a wood in Leiston called Buckles Wood, by which perhaps the ancient name is commemorated.

Among the Leystones, the Bokeles, and the Jenneys, might doubtless have been found models for Chaucer's "perfight gentil knight" or for the jolly:

> . . householdere and that a gret was he
> . . . . . .
> It snewed[2] in his hous of mete and drynk
> Of alle deyntees that men cowde thynke
> . . . . . .
> His table dormant in his halle alway
> Stood redy covered al the longe day.

Some younger brother might have stood for the stout yeoman

> . . . clad in coote and hood of grene
> A shef of pocock arwes bright and kene
> Under his belte he bar ful thriftily
> . . . . . .
> His arwes drowpud nought with fetheres lowe
> And in his hond he bar a mighty bowe
> . . . . . .
> Upon his arme he bar a gay bracer
> And by his side a swerd and a bokeler
> And on the other side a gay daggere.

Chaucer's art, like Rembrandt's, delights in strong contrasts of light and shade. Monks under rule, and priests out in the world, he paints as he saw them, always at enmity with each other. His typical regular

[1] Among the Paston Letters is a letter from William Jenney to John Paston Esqr. written from Theberton. The date is uncertain, but is believed to be in the reign of Henry VI.

[2] We still say "it snewed" in Suffolk.

. . . loved venerye

. . . . . .

Greyhoundes he hadde as swifte as fowel in flight
Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.

How different his specimen of the secular priest, the beautiful original of many a later poet's description. Though but a poor country parson,

. . . riche he was of holy thought and werk
He was also a lerned man, a clerk
That Cristes gospel gladly wolde preche :
His parischens devoutly wolde he teche.
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversite ful pacient

. . . . . .

Wyd was his parisch, and houses fer asondur
But he ne lafte not for reyne ne thondur
In siknesse ne in meschief to visite
The ferrest in his parissche. . . .

This humble priest had a brother, good and worthy as himself, in another calling. He was a poor ploughman.

A trewe swynker and a good was hee,
Lyvynge in pees and parfight charitee.
God loved he best with al his trewe herte
At alle tymes, though him gained or smerte,

And thanne his neighebour right as himselve.
He wolde threisshe and therto dyke and delve
For Cristes sake, with every pore wight
Withouten huyre if it laye in his might.

I have in Theberton known just such Christian gentlemen of the ploughman's calling, and truly and well has it been written that "humble thoughts which smoake from a poore man's cottage, are as sweet a sacrifice unto the Lord as the costly perfumes of the prince's pallace."

It is deplorable that the old manor rolls of Theberton are not available, we might have quarried out of them material of interest; but those we have only date from

1641. Exhaustive searches have been made for the old rolls, but "*non sunt inventi*"—gone, it may be, stolen. Lawyers delight in precedents:—"Whereas" I quote from the city books of Lincoln, date 1520, divers documents "pertaining to the Gild Hall be embezzled and withdrawn . . . . . if no person will acknowledge the having of them, then a monition shall proceed of *cursing* against all such persons as keep any such books rolls . . . . . or other writings." To follow this good precedent would afford the present writer, as their monition doubtless afforded the city fathers of Lincoln, a glow of real satisfaction.

There was in ancient days a park in Theberton of about 188 acres. It seems to have been a long narrow strip, extending east and west between the two water-courses which flow to the eastward, of which one bounds the parish of Theberton on the north, and the other, after running through the Church farm, passes the Wash Cottage, and crosses the road by the rectory corner. From the westward, the park seems to have stretched from within the next parish of Kelsale beyond the Ashen Spring Covert, to the marshes on the Hall farm, comprising such part of the now Hall park, as lies in Theberton. The whole of this area, however, could not have been included, as it covers more ground than 188 acres, but we have no material for more accurate description.

At what date the old park was formed there is no evidence;[1] it may have been at any time between the thirteenth and the end of the seventeenth century. So many parks were made about the thirteenth century, that licences to impark brought considerable revenue to

[1] Doomsday enumerates thirty-one parks in all England, of which the Castle Park at Eye was the only one in Suffolk.

the Crown; for the law was that no man could make a park which was "*quodam modo* to appropriate those creatures which are *feræ naturæ* and *nullius in bonis* to himself, and to restrain them of their natural liberty," without the king's permission. In Henry III.'s time the statute of Merton, and in Edward I.'s time the statute of Westminster, authorised lords of manors to impark, by enclosing portions of the common pasture, so as the rights of commoners were not interfered with.

I think practical needs dictated the growing fashion for making parks. Fat venison is excellent meat, but, though there were both fallow and red deer in the wastes and forests, their nature is to wander far, and they could not be brought to hand always just when wanted; landowners therefore found their advantage in making enclosures, into which the deer could be collected, and kept in good condition for the table. Venison was salted then for the winter. In the late Mr. E. P. Shirley's delightful "Deer and Deer Parks" is found a record of 1298 which, put into English, is as follows:— "The King to the guardians of the bishoprick of Ely (the See was then vacant) we command that one hundred, fallow deer now in season in the episcopal park be salted, and dried, (smoked?) and so salted and dried be stored in tubs," &c. Sport also in a mediæval sense, was promoted by imparking. The mode then was to drive the deer past fixed stands, "stable stands," whence sportsmen shot them with arrows; just as, with rifles in the place of bows, is done to-day by German potentates. An enclosed park was thus, in an old writer's words, "always ready to furnish you with those animals (deer) either for use or for pleasure."

So the fashion of imparking grew, and more and more

A Survivor of the Old Deer Park.

parks were enclosed, till the latter part of the sixteenth century, when Harrison estimated that no less than one twentieth part of the kingdom was used for deer and for conies.

The beginning of the seventeenth century saw the tide of imparking turn. Parks brought "no maner of gaine or profit to the owners sith they comonlye give awaye their fleshe, never taking penny for the same, because venission in England is neither bought nor soulde by the right owner." And desirous of some profit, gentlemen threw down their park palings, and, as it was then quaintly said, made the deer leap over, to give place to bullocks.

There is no evidence when the Theberton deer park was disparked; only, we know it must have been after 1601, for which year Davy records this extract from the lost manor rolls: "*Curia generalis cum leta tenta 5 Aug. 43, Eliz. Juratores presentant quod parcus domini hujus manerii fractus est, sed per quem incognitum est.*" The jurors present that the park of the lord of this manor was broken into, but by whom it is not known.

It may be noted here, that the modern Hall park with some adjacent land, all part of the old enclosure, perhaps the original nucleus of it, is at this day tithe free, subject only to a trifling modus. It was never Abbey land. Can it be that deer, being wild animals or in legal phrase *feræ naturæ*, the ancient park, which produced nothing else, was never titheable, and was subjected, instead of tithes, to the modus? A case in point may be cited for this. Mote Park in Kent contains 480 acres, of which 140 are free of tithe; this is believed to be because those 140 acres represent the original deer park.

There probably were deer in the park at Theberton of

Sir Edmund Jenney, who had been knighted at the marriage of Prince Arthur with Katharine of Arragon; but he accepted, as did other gentlemen in the like case, presents of venison. In "Deer and Deer Parks," are printed the accounts from 1515 to 1518 of the Duke of Norfolk's "parker" at Framlingham Castle. Among persons to whom the Duke sent venison are named both Sir Edmund, and his eldest son William who died before him, "one buk" each. The park keeper's orthography is strange, he seems to have been a north-country man, we Suffolkers never misplace H's. His list of names comprised, besides the two Jenneys, most of the prominent folk of the neighbourhood.

Among them are "my lord (the bishop) of Norwich"; "my lord Wylleby" (Willoughby of Parham); "the abbot of Sypton" (Sibton); "Sir Wm. Rows" (an ancestor of the Earl of Stradbroke); "The Abbas (abbess) of Brusyzard" (Bruisyard a convent of Poor Clares); "the Master of Metyngham" (Mettingham College); "Johan Henyham" (whose family, dating from the reign of Canute, ended with William Heveningham the regicide); "Sir Arthur Hopton" (who sold Henham to the Rouses); "The Prior of Hey (Eye), and the Scoell Mastyr"; "The balys (bailiffs) of Ypswyche"; "the Abbot of Bery" (Bury); "the Prior of Butley"; "the Prior of Seynt Petyrs"; "the Prior of Woodbrege"; "the Parson of framlyngham for tythe" (a voluntary gift in lieu of tithe not claimable?); "Sr. Richard Wentforthe" (Wentworth of Nettlestead); "Sr. Anthony Wingfield" (of Wingfield Castle); "Sir Richard Cawndysche" (Cavendish); "Sir Johan Glemham" (of Benhall, pronounced now as written in 9 Elizabeth, Benall); "the Priories (prioress) of Campsey (whose house was owner of the advowson of

Carlton by Kelsale); "the Parson of Orford"; "the Prior of Thelforthe" (? Thetford); "Sr. Thomas Tyrell" (of Gipping, one of whose family is said to have murdered the princes in the Tower).

Convents of monks and nuns were obviously plentiful as blackberries, or as squires' houses now; strangely enough, the abbot of Leyston is not mentioned among the favoured heads of religious houses, to each of whom was sent "one buk." Of the family of Glemham, was later "that most famous and venterous gentleman, Edward Glemham of Benhall in Suffolk," whose "honorable actions . . . . latelie obtained against the Spaniards and the Holy League in four sundrie fights," were published in 1591 "for an encouragement to our English Adventurers (gentlemen sailars and soldiars) that serve against the enemies of God and our country."[1]

I cannot keep from my readers some quaint further extracts from the "parker's" accounts, which, though not directly concerning Theberton, are yet of interest, throwing light just where we want it, on the commonplaces of our forbears' life in the neighbourhood; such for instance as:—

"Dalling of Laxfield Merser (Mercer) ij doggis of hys came in and kyllyd a doo and a fawne."

"On holy rood evyn I found in the parke Sr. Iohan

[1] H. R. wrote "in commendation of the right worshipfull and valiant Generall, Edward Glemham, Esquire":—

Brave men at Armes, England's Cheueleers,
Let Glemham's honors, 'mongst you be of name
Whose conquests gainde, 'gainst Spanish Cauiliers
With goulden Trumpe, eternised is by fame:
Turkie, Spaine, and France reports the same,
To England's honor Glemham gaines renowne
In spite of those which at his weale dothe frowne.

The little book from which these lines are extracted was reprinted in 1820.

bowse parysch pryst of tanyston (Tannington parish. Priests being graduates were then called Sir) with hys bow bent and an arrow in yt, betyng (making ready to shoot) at the herd."

"Item—Johan pulsham (Foulsham a Theberton family name) thelder (the elder) cam rydyng be the wey, and fowned a do without, and hys doge kyllyd hym—and he hyng hys dog!"

In 1519, was killed "for Sr. Iohan Rows, for syngynge of his first Messe (Mass), one bucke."

"Item the Mundaye afore Mychaelmes daye, cam in a dogge of Johnsons of denyngtone the schoe maker, and kyllyd ij dooes, and then the dogge was take up, and I sende to hym to wete (know) wether he wold have the dogge agayne, and he send me word naye, and then I hynge him upon a tre."

I transcribe a few entries more, which relate to historical persons in our county.

Among the bucks killed, the "parker" accounts for:—"the frenche quene one buk, item ij fawnys item she sent to me for a fawne, item the quene cam agayne and kyllyd iiij bukkys." This was Mary Tudor, the young widow of Louis XII. She married "that martiall pompous gentilman," Charles Brandon, the Duke of Suffolk, of whom it is related that, at a grand tournament on the occasion of their wedding, he tilted with his horse in trappings half cloth of gold and half frieze, with these lines on them,

> Cloth of gold do not despise
> Though thou art matched with cloth of frieze
> Cloth of frieze be not too bold
> Though thou art matched with cloth of gold.[1]

Again—"for the comyng of my lord Cardenall, one

[1] He was interred at Bury St. Edmund's.

FRAMLINGHAM CASTLE.

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buk. Item he cam trow the parke and kyllyd one buk and a do, item on the next day I was sygned to kyll for him xij bukkys." This was of course the "top proud cardinal" son of a grazier of Ipswich—Thomas Wolsey.

Again—"to Wyndferdying (Winfarthing, near Diss, where was an ancient park one mile in circumference) was sent for my lord of Surrey 121 quyke (live) deer taken at seven different times." This was Thomas, Earl of Surrey, afterwards third Duke of Norfolk, who married Anne, daughter of King Edward IV.

In those days, gentlemen did not sell their venison; and licence to kill deer in another man's park was a prized privilege to be granted in solemn form of law. The Sir John Heveningham above mentioned had a great park at Heveningham, where, at a later date, Queen Bess is said to have slain a fat buck with her own hand. Among his neighbours was Nicholas Bohun Esquire, of Westhall; and in 1533, a Deed Poll was executed under the hands and seal of Sir John, Dame Alice his wife, and Anthony his son and heir apparent, whereby, Sir John, with consent of his wife and son, "graunted to Nicholas a yerly fee of oon buk in somer and oon doo in wynter, to be taken of my gifte within my parke at Heveyngham, in seasonable and convenyent tymes in the yer: to have and enjoye the said fee of oon buk and oon doo yerly, to be taken in such tyme and place as is aforesaid, to the said Nicholas and his assyns during his life naturall": and it was provided that it should "be lefull to the same Nicholas, at his own plesure, to kille yerly the said buk and doo in convenyent tymes of the yer, with hys houndys, grey houndys, or long bowe; soo always the same Nicholas be there present in his own person; and so that the said

Nicholas do gif convenyent knowledge to the keper of the seid parke for the tyme being of his comyng their to hunte and kyll as is aforesaid ; or ellys the same buk and doo to be killed by the same keper, and delivered to the seid Nicholas or his assigns at the seid park."

CHAPTER IV

WE have already traced the advowson of Theberton into the hands of the monks of Leyston, who, after 1372, had the right of presenting rectors to the benefice.

They had not to wait long for their first opportunity. In 1374, they presented a priest, one Robert de Dersham (query Darsham) "confrater et concanonicus," to the then vacant church of Theberton; and their presentation was followed, in due course, by the canonical institution of the same monk by Henry de Spencer, "the fighting bishop of Norwich," who was then residing at his episcopal house at Hoxne.

This done, the canons set to work to gain a further step by squeezing out of Theberton advantages for the future, more tangible than their bare right of patronage. The law then permitted a process, known by an euphemism as "appropriation," whereby parish priests were plundered to aggrandize religious houses.

When a spiritual corporation, a monastery for instance, was patron of a rectory, it could, upon a vacancy, make itself also the rector, and entitle itself in that capacity to take the tithes of the parish. The cure of souls could be vicariously served by a clerk, may-be a monk in priest's orders of their own house, as their vicar or deputy, who would be in the position of a modern curate—the rector

house taking the tithes, and paying the vicar-curate a stipend for his services.

Monkish apologists raked in the ashes of antiquity for a justification of such robberies. Tithes, they maintained, were originally divided into four equal parts—one part for the bishop, one for reparations of the church and priest's manse, one for the poor and for the exercise of hospitality, leaving only one fourth for the support of the parson. And why, if one fourth had then sufficed for that purpose, should it not suffice still. And as to the three-fourths—the bishop needing his fourth no longer—how could the money be applied more piously than to support the professed religious, holy devoted men such as themselves?

This hypocritical iniquity, practised now for generations, had become a great and crying scandal. It resulted that Rectorial hospitality was neglected, churches and rectory houses fell into disrepair, sometimes not even any minister was provided. Monks kept "parsonages in their own hands, dealt but a twentieth part to the poor, and preached but once in the yeare to them that paid the tithes." Even a Pope, Alexander IV., had in the thirteenth century stigmatized the system, as "the bane of religion, the destruction of the church, and a poison that infected the whole nation."[1]

Let us see how an appropriation was effected at Theberton.

There is preserved in the Register of the Sacrist of Norwich, a document which gives a full account of it. The deed bears date, "The Chapter House of Leyston

[1] Hooker wrote centuries afterwards of: "that which hath been taken from the church in appropriations known to amount to the value of £126,000 yearly." This, it will be remembered, represents a vastly larger figure according to the present value of money.

Abbey, 15 April, 1381." From it, we learn that Henry Despencer the bishop of Norwich, had, with the consent of the Chapter of Norwich, "annexed and united and appropriated" (the actual appropriation was it seems effected in the previous year) the church of Theberton to the convent of Leyston; and that the Abbot and Convent agreed to pay, during the appropriation, an annual pension of 4*s.* to the Sacrist, at the Michaelmas and Easter synods of the church.

At that date, 1381, Robert de Dersham was still the Rector of Theberton; and, till he vacated the benefice, the monks had not an opportunity to take advantage of the appropriation. He died, it would seem, in 1391. In the January following, one John, like his predecessor surnamed de Dersham and like him a monk of Leyston, was, in the capacity of a lawfully constituted "proctor of the religious men the Abbot and convent, instituted by the said father (the bishop) into the parish church of Theberton then vacant." The document effecting this is interesting enough to set out. It runs thus, translated from the Latin and omitting the merely formal parts: Henry by divine permission Bishop of Norwich to our beloved sons the Abbot and Convent of the monastery of the blessed Mary of Leystone of the Premonstratensian order in our diocese, who now are or at all future times shall be, salutation grace and benediction. As regards the parish church of Theberton in our Diocese now vacant by the death of brother Robert de Dersham the last rector there, of which you have obtained the right of patronage; we, by the authority of our ordinary (jurisdiction) and by virtue of the privilege of the Apostolic See by Pope Celestine of blessed memory of old granted to you and your monastery,[1] do canoni-

[1] Referred to by Hooker as "the Pope's usurped power of appropriating ecclesiastical livings unto Monks."

cally unite annex and incorporate and appropriate it to your proper use for ever. And we grant the same, in the person of brother John de Dersham member and canon of the said monastery and your proctor legally constituted, according to the form and effect of our letters to you, as to the union annexation incorporation and appropriation aforesaid, made and sealed with our seal and the seal of the chapter of our Cathedral Church. And we admit and canonically institute you Rectors in the same. Saving to us and to our successors and to our Cathedral Church and also to the Archdeacon of Suffolk all rights, etc., etc.—as in the said letters of appropriation are more fully set out.

Thus, the community of the Abbot and Canons of Leyston, hitherto only the patrons, were now constituted the incumbent rectors also, of Theberton.

During the next few years, I suppose that the Abbey served the cure of Theberton by a stipendiary "vicar."

In 1401, we find that King Henry IV. presented one Richard Herman priest to the "parish church of Theberton," to which he was in due course lawfully instituted. The words "the parish church" meant, of course, the Rectory.

How the King obtained this presentation does not appear.

Besides the evidence of the form of presentation, the fact that Richard Herman was in as rector, is shown *aliunde*. We have it, that, in the second year of his incumbency, one Mary daughter of Thomas Power of Theberton granted to him, together with other persons, certain lands situate in Theberton, describing him as "Richard rector of Theberton."

In 1404, we find it recorded that the Sacrist of Norwich Cathedral had, for that year, received nothing in respect

of his pension of 4*s.* from the Abbot of Leyston on account of the church of Theberton, "by reason it is said that the church was then in the hands of seculars." Richard Herman seems to have been a secular priest.

In 1408, the Abbot and Convent again presented to the parish church (rectory) a monk of their house one brother John Pethagh, who was instituted accordingly.

Pethagh's incumbency was short; and in 1409 the King again presented one Henry Leycestre who perhaps had Court interest. He was not even in Holy Orders: "*primam habuit tonsuram clericalem*"; yet he was instituted the same year "*in ecclesie parochiali*" to the parish church. Perhaps this was not in canonical order, for another institution of the same man is recorded in the year following, by which time he had attained subdeacon's orders. Now, there can be no room for doubt as to the rectorial status of Leycestre; for when one Hugo Sprot—I think also a secular—from St. Andrew's Holborn, "a suburb of London" (how oddly it sounds now), exchanged livings with him, Sprot's institution was expressed to be on the resignation of Henry Leycestre "late rector" of Theberton.

We have seen that the King had presented one turn, then the Abbot and Convent presented, and then the King again for the alternate turn, and that all the presentees were canonically instituted to the rectory.

Clearly, these facts do not consist with the validity of the appropriation. Had it been and remained valid, a Rector could not have been legally instituted; for by the appropriation (to which moreover the King had consented) the Rectory had been "annexed incorporated and united" with the advowson, and thereby the Abbot and

Convent of Leystone had become for ever the incumbent Rectors—"parsons imparsonees," to use the quaint old phrase—of Theberton. The Rectory was full, there was no vacancy to be presented to, either by King or by Abbey, yet the King did in fact, and so did the Abbey, present clerks to the Rectory, and their presentations held good, for their presentees were in due form instituted by the bishop of the diocese.

But what had invalidated the appropriation? How came the monks to lose such a highly prized spiritual possession? Of course, for some reason we do not know, it may have been invalid *ab initio; or*, if that could be, have been surrendered; *or* again, this conjecture may be worth considering, it may possibly be that, having parted by grant to the King with a part of the organism of their advowson—a next or perhaps next alternate right of presentation to the rectory—and rectors having by virtue thereof been presented and instituted, the union between rectory and advowson had been severed, and being once severed, they could never be re-united; and thus, the benefice had been irrevocably disappropriated. *Or*—there is another more likely alternative; the monks may have concluded that it was their interest, not to appoint vicars, having regard to the restrictions of a statute passed in 1402. That Act provided that all vicars should be seculars, not members of any religious house, that they should be perpetual, not removable at the caprice of monasteries, be canonically instituted and inducted, and be sufficiently endowed at the discretion of the ordinary. This made it impossible for the Convent to provide pleasant berths for its monks, as vicars; or by appointing them in rapid rotation, to arrange refreshing holidays. May it not be then, that they thought to evade the obnoxious act by an expedient? They might,

as patrons, regardless of the appropriation, present a monk to the rectory—the statute referred only to vicars —and might they not extort from him being under vows of obedience by the rule of their order, security for the payment to them of the bulk of his tithes, and, make him sign a bond besides, conditioned that he should resign after a prescribed period, or on demand of the community. Probably this had been devised—these men of religion were very sharp practitioners—when they presented brother John Pethagh.

The invalidity or loss of this Theberton appropriation is the more remarkable, seeing that had there been many instances, no great number of vicarages would now be in existence; whereas the fact is, that (as appears by the Diocesan Calendar for 1908) out of three hundred and fifty-five benefices in the Archdeaconry of Suffolk, no less than one hundred and forty-two are vicarages, nearly the whole number of which originated from appropriations and the Act of 1402.

Sprot, after a four years' incumbency, was succeeded by a Leyston canon, Clement surnamed of Blythburgh. He was presented by his House [1] which of course was still the patron, and was in due course instituted to the rectory of Theberton.

This monk retained the benefice for eighteen years, resigning it to become abbot of Leyston, which dignity he held till 1445.

In his time it was, that the revolt in men's minds against monastic greed found striking expression in Parliament. The House of Commons petitioned the King "that all parsonages appropriated to some religious house not endowing vicars, might within six months be

[1] In the bishop's register it is written that he was presented by the Abbot of Sibton, but this was evidently a clerical error.

unappropriated." No legislation seems to have followed in the sense of the petition: luckily for Leyston Abbey, for the monks held other appropriate churches, and there is evidence that they worked them in flagrant defiance of law; even as late as 1478, they had to make this return to Bishop Redman their visitor: "*quinque habent ecclesias canonici, sunt curati in quibusdam, sed non perpetui.*"

When Clement resigned Theberton, the Abbot and Convent presented Nicholas Craton, another member of their brotherhood, and he again was instituted to "the parish church."

To him after less than two years, succeeded another monk John Geyst, or Geyse; he died after one year—in October, 1438.

Then in November following, the Abbot and Convent presented John Doonwych, another member of their House, who was duly instituted. This was an eventful presentation. The monks' crafty expedient to evade the statute of 1402 was to have its seaworthiness tested.

A time came, when for some reason, the Abbot desired to remove this monk from the rectory of Theberton. Possibly, having bound himself to hand part of his rectorial tithes over to his patrons, he may have failed in his payments. At all events the Abbot determined to eject him. Doonwych, *beatus possidens*, refused to budge. He probably was a cunning unscrupulous fellow; the convent had sailed near the wind, why should not he? True, he may have agreed to resign on demand, but the unjust compact, designed to evade a plain Act of Parliament, had been forced upon him while under monastic duress. True, he had vowed vows, but what were vows to him, now that he was no longer an inmate of the cloister?

The Abbey had, on their part, a strong champion; Clement the abbot was not a man to be trifled with.

What the event was will be unfolded.

It must be premised that the visitors of the Premontratensian order were, at this time, Thomas Abbot of Begham, and William Abbot of Radegunde, with joint and several powers.

They made this petition to the High Court of Chancery; I venture slightly to modernise the archaic spelling.

"Right Mekely besecheth Thomas Abbot of Begham and William Abbot of Radegunde, visitors jointly and severally and by thair Commissaries, of the Premonstratensian order within the Roialme (realm) of Engeland, to have correccion, and duely to punisshe eny of this same ordre defectif or rebyll to it, within the said Roialme. But, gracious lord, for as muche as one John Doonwiche, one of the said ordre, and of the house of Leyston, was noised defectif and not rueled after the fourme of his said ordre, the forsaid Thomas committed power to Clement Abbot of Leyston, to cite and calle the said John to come afore hym, to answere after the forme of his seid ordre; and so John, by the said Clement was lawfully cited, and it disobeyd, so that by due process he standeth accursed. Whereuppon the forseid Clement beyng Commissarie, came to Theberton a parissh belongyng to the said Abbey of Leyston, whare the said John was abiding against the will of his ordre, kepyng there the cure; and there, required the Constable of the same Parissh, after the forme of our said souvrain lordes letters, to succour and support hym, in reformacion and correccion of the said John, to whiche the said Constable agreed and obeyd; but gracious lord, the forsaid John, of grete malice contrarie to his order, by

the grete supportacion of John Curteys and John Sturmy of Theberton, disobeid the said Clement and his correccion, and yit doth. Whereuppon, if hit please your gracious lordship to consider the rebellion of the seid John Doonwiche to his order, and howe that he, standyng accursid, kepith the cure of the said Parissh, ministryng there the sacraments of holy church, by the supportacion of the forseid John Curteys and John Sturmy, thereuppon of your good grace, to grant writtes subpena, direct to the forseid John, John, and John, to appere byfore you in the Chauncerie, uppon a cartain day, to be examined uppon the matter aforseid, for the love of God and in weyrk of charete."

Compliant with this petition, a writ dated 28th June, 1445 was granted out of Chancery, directing examinations to be taken.

Accordingly, we read that on Tuesday the Feast of St. Bartholomew the Apostle, in the twenty-third year of Henry VI. (1445), John Doonwych, with John Curteys and John Sturmyn, appeared at Halesworth before Sir John Heveningham acting on a writ out of Chancery, and they, and twelve other persons, among whom were John Feld, Geoffrey Ulff, Ralph Cotyngham and William Andrewe, all of Theberton, deposed on their oathes as follows :

They swore that Clement Abbot of Leyston had presented the said John Donewyche to the church of Theberton, to which church he was admitted by the ordinary, and lawfully instituted ; and by reason of being thus under obedience to the said ordinary, the said John was exempt from his order, and absolved from his oath ; and that he administered the cure of Theberton well and honestly. Also, that the said Abbot Clement,

with one William Fraunceys and many others to the number of twenty persons arrayed in warlike manner, came on Ascension Day last past, to the church of Theberton, and made an assault on the said John Doonwych while he was celebrating service there, and arrested him, and wanted to take him with them. Whereupon the said John Curteys and John Sturmey and other parishioners of Theberton, went and spoke to the said abbot and those who came with him, with civil and honest words, and induced the said abbot to release the said Doonwych.

How strange this seems to us, here now in modern Theberton. The background of the picture we can easily bring before us. Our age-worn church, with its old round tower and long ridge of thatched roof, cannot be much altered, though whether the octagon top had then been added to the round tower we do not know. Again those crumbling walls, on the borders of our parish, suggest the then noble Abbey on the new site, to which, a century before, the monks had migrated, as "bees, which having first built in the ground and hollow trees, get them hives in gardens ; and leaving the deserts, gain them princely houses in pleasant places" ; their church was now cathedral-like, with choir and nave, aisles and transepts ; and a refectory, abbot's lodgings with other conventual buildings, covered a great space of ground. Between our church and the Abbey, the way was then a grassy track, a mile or more, through unfenced woodland and pasture.

Even the interior of our church we can well imagine. A rood screen then separated chancel from nave : perhaps the monastic patrons had already added to the chancel to afford space for showy ceremonial : our font looking

so ancient now, probably had not then taken the place of one yet more ancient;[1] the roof was unceiled then, the thatch probably showing between the rafters.

And now, let us try to picture the rustic congregation on that Holy Thursday 1445. The lord of the manor may have been there. Imagine him in a long gown of rich material, his hair falling down below his shoulders, purse and dagger hanging from his girdle :

> "An anlas and a gipser al of silk
> Heng at his gerdul whit as morne mylk."

The toe points of his shoes, pikes[2] or beaks they were called, ridiculously long, and tied up to his knees with silver chains; we may see the costume in kings and knaves upon our playing cards. And perhaps his lady was there also, dressed in the fashion of card queens, let the Queen of Hearts serve for her model; and a crowd of more humble folk, the men with hair cropped close, clad in short coats with leather belts, worsted hose and broad shoes; and on the opposite side of the church, their wives and daughters, in hoods entirely enveloping their hair, the older ones with "barbs" of pleated linen covering the chin like linen beards; all the women in voluminous petticoats, and not deformed by then unthought of stays—they were first worn in the time of Elizabeth.

A hushed devout congregation we may not doubt; kneeling on the bare earthen floor, perhaps for that great day strewn with rushes, there were no fixed seats then. The parish priest stood to celebrate mass at the altar. But what was that? A hubbub, a sudden clatter of arms. From their places among the worshippers, two

[1] The present font, I am told, dates from about 1510.

[2] These pikes or beaks were some years afterwards, by 4 Ed. IV. c. 7, curtailed to two inches, under a penalty both to the shoemaker and the wearer.

THE FONT, THEBERTON CHURCH.

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reputable men, John Curteys, and John Sturmyn a landowner in the parish, rise from their knees; to meet at the porch door a familiar figure; it was their old rector, now father Abbot of Leystone, in very angry mood, and with him a menie of a score men "arrayed in warlike guise;" who marched into the church and seized the priest! Curteys and Sturmyn at last prevailed with the abbot to let the parson go; and he concluded the service.

Whatever may have been the offence of Doonwych, can the conduct of Clement the Abbot be judged to have been less than outrageous?

How the legal issue was decided I cannot say, but the fact is, that brother John Doonwych, only a few weeks after that scandalous scene, resigned the benefice of Theberton, exchanging it apparently for another living.

His successor was one John Hert, I believe a secular priest, presented by the monastery, whose institution is described, as upon the resignation of John Doonwych "the late rector."

CHAPTER V

It is not without interest to find the mere names of men who lived in our parish nearly five hundred years ago, but we are fortunate in knowing more than the mere names of some of them.

We know that William Fraunceys, who supported the abbot, died in 1459; and his will is before me as I write. He dwelt in Theberton, a man it seems of some substance, and was, according to the standard of those days, a good churchman. He left to the high altar of our church one mark, and half a noble more for reparation of the church; to the light of the Blessed Virgin in the monastery of Leyston half a noble; to the friars minor of Dunwich half a noble (these were Franciscans or Grey Friars, whose old wall pierced by two fine gates, yet surrounds the remains of their conventual buildings). To the Friars Preachers of Dunwich he gave 6*s.* 8*d.* (these were Dominican or Black Friars; their convent was long ago washed away, with their church which contained the bodies of "Richard Bokyl of Leston, and Alice, and Alice, his wives," together with other benefactors); to John Curteys of Theberton (defender of Doonwych), he bequeathed one noble. For a secular chaplain to celebrate (in the parish church, no doubt) for two years for his soul, he made due provision. And he provided for a potation, that curious mediæval blend of festivity religion and charity called a "cherche-ale;" and

Curteys (defender of Doonwych) was appointed one of his executors.

John Sturmyn, the other defender of Doonwych, we find again as executor of the wills of two more inhabitants of Theberton. One testator was William Andrews—from whose estate he had to contribute: to make the tabernacle of St. Peter of Theberton, for a secular priest to celebrate in the church of Theberton for two years and more, and for the repair of a way at "Estbrugge"—Eastbridge; this will was proved at Theberton on the 14th July, 1464. The other testator was Thomas Hervey, who bequeathed one quarter of barley to the altar of our church, and left to his son Thomas three acres of land called Jonefields (perhaps Johns' fields, but not now identifiable) when he should arrive at full age; if he should die, then to his wife Alice, who seems to have been a Middleton woman. Hervey died on the 6th day of February, 1474.

Geoffrey Ulff, another witness against Abbot Clement, was evidently a man of great trust; we find him as executor for no less than six Theberton people. Ulff was in the 15th century a common name in Theberton, Kelsale, and Middleton.

Of the will of John Feld or Field, another of the witnesses, Master William Jenney and Edmund his son, were supervisors. Field died on St. Mark's Day 1471, leaving a widow Agnes. She died in 1476, and I quote shortly from her will. "To Joan Townysende of Knodishale an 'Almarye'" (I think an Armoire or cupboard[1]); "to Godson William Townysende, if he

[1] In 1601, Sir Francis Hastings, in a speech in the House of Commons spoke of certain persons as worthy to be locked up in an "Ambery." Specific bequests of furniture were common; such things were then of greater relative value than in these days of machinery.

wishes to be priested, 13*s.* 4*d.* and a sheep. . . . I leave to the Rector of Theberton my green cloak for his trouble." That rector, with John Herberd, and Geoffrey Ulff were Widow Field's executors.

We have also the testament of Ralph Cotyngham or Codyngham, which dealt with his house in Theberton, and lands in "Theberton, Medilton, Fordele and Westlylton," and provided, as did that of Fraunceys, for a "cherchale,"—probably partaken of in the church itself, and also for a trental—thirty masses daily for thirty days—for his soul.

For 1461, we have in a business letter from Richard Calle to John Paston, an interesting statement of prices which helps to gauge the real value of legacies that at first sight seem so trifling:—"They will not give a noble (6*s.* 8*d.*) nor even 6*s.* for a cow, . . . wheat 12*d.* a coomb, barley 8*d.*, malt 9*d.* and 10*d.*"

The lord of the manor whose presence on that Thursday I have suggested, would have been the William Jenney who, with his son Edmund, was supervisor of John Field's will. He was afterwards M.P. for Dunwich, and then, as Sir William, one of the Justices of the King's Bench; and having seen the Wars of the Roses, and those dark days for England of Jack Cade's rising, died in 1483.

In Weever's time there remained in our church this inscription:—"*Hic jacet Willelmus Jermey miles unus Justiciar Domini Regis de Banco suo et Elizabeth uxor eius, quiquidem Willelmus obiit xxiii die Decembris Anno Domini mccccclxxxiij. Quorum animabus propitietur Deus Amen,*" Jermey is evidently a clerical error for Jenney. The inscription has disappeared, no person knows what has become of it.

The only bit of ancient brass now remaining is

a small plate let into a sepulchral slab in the floor of the nave inscribed in black letters "*Orate pro anima Katerine Pays cujus Anime propicietur Deus.—Amen.*" No more is known of Katerine than that she died and was buried. The date of the brass is thought to be about 1500.[1]

Dowsing, the ruthless destroyer of all "*orate pro animâ*" inscriptions, seems not to have come in person to Theberton, but to have sent one Francis Verden as his deputy. We of this "sweet and civil county of Suffolk," where it was his lot to be born, do not pride ourselves on Dowsing.

We have, in duty bound, had to advert upon the craft of the monks of Leystone; but they were no worse than were mediæval monks in general. Indeed, there is good evidence which redounds much to their credit.

At three years intervals, for many years, Bishop Richard Redman, on behalf of the Mother House of Prémontré, made triennial visitations of the Abbey. And on every occasion this eminent bishop (successively of St. Asaph of Exeter and of Ely) speaks well of it. In 1482, he thanked God that, after diligent enquiry, he found everything well, and charity well observed. In 1485, there seems to have been no visitation, it was a year of great dying—the Sudor Anglicus, the terrible Sweating Sickness. In 1488, the house was in an excellent state, and the church services were carried on in a better way than in any other house; and to that, the bishop attributed the prosperity of Leyston in temporals and spirituals. In 1491, the bishop testified to the excellent rule of the abbot, and the state of the monastery, which

[1] At Dennington, in 1662, 51½ lbs. weight of brass "which had formerly been taken off the gravestones in the church and chancel," was found hidden in the vestry.

agreed, he said, with the belief of all, clergy and laity —only the canons wore too large tonsures. In 1494, the highest possible praise was accorded to the administration of the abbot, the bishop found nothing to correct. In 1497, the excellent state of the house and the administration of the abbot was commended. Only at the last of the visitations in 1500, do we find any word of blame: one of the canons had committed the prodigious offence of going out of the enclosure—meaning no doubt without the abbot's leave. The bishop added the grave admonition that "the canons were to use their hoods over their cloaks when out, and never tassels!"

Many of the canons seem to have been drawn from the neighbourhood. Among the names are John Yoxford, William Woodbridge, John Leystone, John Halesworth, John Beccles.

When there was but one form of religion in the country, and all admitted the supremacy of the Roman Pontiff, Church discipline for lay people, as well as for clerics, was a very real thing. In some ways, it worked good, touching a class of offences against morality, of which the common law did not take cognizance; but on the other hand, the canon law, administered by "Officials of Ordinaries" and their Apparitors, was a foreign thing, which affronted the English sense of justice. Our English laws regard an accused man as innocent till proved guilty. The canon law took the contrary view, and the Church courts were as much prosecutors as judges. On mere common report, or on the word of an Apparitor, they would summon a man to appear before them, and, assuming his guilt, put him on his oath to admit or to deny it.

The Apparitor acted as a social spy and common

informer. His office was not only to execute the Church Courts' mandates and citations, but also to smell out offences among his own neighbours. Fees, it is needless to say, were exacted at each stage of the proceedings. The whole system was repugnant to our national traditions, and lent itself to gratification of spite, to bribery, and all manner of abuses.

Archdeacon Hale, in 1847 collected a series of cases heard by certain Courts Christian as they were called, from 1475 and, continuing after the Reformation, to 1640.

We may perhaps mention a few of the lighter sort, such as:—In 1497, a man was brought up for wearing the garb of a hermit, not having been professed a hermit; a monk for wearing the vestments of a secular priest; a rector for using arts of sorcery to defame his neighbours; a layman for violating a bishop's park, by practising archery and playing games; an aquæ bajulus—a parish clerk—for defaming his priest with "Goo forth fole and set a cockes combe on thi crowne." All these were in Henry VII.'s time.

In the next reign, 1528, we find the trials of two "wise women"—a race by no means extinct, even yet to my knowledge, in our homely Suffolk. One, Margaret Hunt, was put on her oath to defend herself, and confessed enormous iniquities: she "knelys downe"—these were her words—"and prays the blessed Trinite to save them (her patients) and hele them from all ther weked enemys; and then she techeth them ix nights for to sey v paternosters, v aves, and a crede, and iii paternosters iii aves and credes in the worshyp of Seynte Spyrite; and when they take ther chamber and go to bedde at night, to sey one pater, one ave, and one crede, in the worshypp of Seynte Ive, to save them from all

envy. And then for them that lye seke of the ague, she techeth them to gether herbe-grace, peneryall, redde sage, redde fenell, and the barre rote, before the son downe, so that it be the last dryncke that the syke drincketh at night. And for them that hath ony sorys on ther bodys, she techeth them to gether herbe-grace, dyll, verveye, marygoldes, put a lyttill holy water to them, and sey sume prayers ; and when she stampethe to sey iii paternosters, iii aves, and a crede, in the worshyp of our Lady, yf it be a woman that stampeth ; and if it be a man he must sey iii paternosters, iii aves, and a crede, in the worshypp of Jesus." And this in Latin ; that she had learned the aforesaid doctrine in Wales, from a certain woman called mother Emet. The punishment of this poor creature is not recorded.

The other wise woman, Elizabeth Fotman, practised upon horses as well as men. She was forced to confess that "she toke the mense rodd and put it to the horse bely that was syke of the botts, and made crosses on a caryers horse bely, and the horse rose up by and by; and that the seid rodde did grow besyde the Rhodes"; also, she said "she used to hele men of the tothe-ache, and the worms in chylders belys, and getheryng of herbs, yauyng over them."

The following reminds us of a custom now long forgotten. So late as 1543, two men barely escaped excommunication, upon their own extorted confession, "that y^{a} haith not maid ii mo torches, nor yet kepede the drynkynge in the parishe, accordynge the laudable use and custome of the same parishe. Whereupon, the judge decreed yt y^{a} shall make ii sufficient torches, betwyxt this daie and the feast of Saint John Baptiste next ensuynge, and delyver them unto the churchwardens, accordynge to the laudable usage and custome of the same

parishe." With regard to torches, ever since "the 3rd century, when besides adopting other pagan ceremonies, they also lighted torches to the martyrs in the day-time as the heathens did to their gods, this use of torches and tapers in churches, both by day and night, has prevailed in Catholic worship." The decree did not deal with the "drynkynges." What a "drynkynge" was, is well shown by a will of 1527, of one John Cole of Thelnetham in our county. He left the rent of three acres of land "to fynde yearelie a busshell and halffe of malte to be browne (brewed), and a busshell of whete to be baked to fynde a drinkinge upon Ascension Even, everlastinge for ye prisshe of Thelnetham."

Yet later again, in the second year of Mary's reign, occurred the case of a wizard. William Hasylwood clerk, accused of using art magic "wytchecraft or sorcery with a seve and a payre of sheeres," confessed: "that, in July was twelve monyths last past, he the same Hasylwood, having then lost his purse with xiiii grootes (4*s.* 8*d.*) in the same, and thereupon remembryng that he, being a chylde, dyd hear his mother declare that when any man hadd lost anny thing, then they wold use a syve and a payre of sheeres to bring to knowledge who hadd the thing lost; and so, this examinante upon occasion thereof, dyd take a seve and a payre of sheeres, and hanged the seve by the poynte of the sheeres, and sayed thees wordes—by Peter and Paule he hath yt, namyng the partye whom he, in that behalf suspected: which thing he never used but ones, and also declared yt to one of his acqueyntaunce." Poor Hasylwoode had to do penance thereupon.

Later, we shall meet with local apparitors, and with public penance suffered in our own parish church of Theberton.

John Hert was the last rector we have named. To him succeeded Thomas Joye in 1450. He was a secular, presented to our parish church by the abbey; the monks we may suspect had taken fright at the escapade of brother John Doonwych. Plainly, it was not safe to arm one of their brotherhood with weapons he might turn against his own community.

How they must have lamented the loss of the Theberton appropriation. From their other parishes still appropriate, the tithes, subject to a fixed allowance for the *vicar*, belonged to themselves as *rectors* by absolute legal title; whereas from a rector of this parish of Theberton, were he a secular they had no claim; and even were he of their own religious family, no hold, except perhaps upon paper possibly invalid, securities.

There were, we may be sure, anxious debates in the chapter house of Leyston Abbey. Could only some ingenious plan be hit upon, might they not even yet recover their rectorial position, and be able again to appoint a vicar to Theberton. They would be too glad to embrace the provisions, which they once thought so odious, of the Act of 1402.

Now for the outcome of their deliberations; we have a significant document which slightly abbreviated runs thus:—

"On the penultimate day of October 1452, before Master John Selott, Chancellor of the bishop (Walter Leyhart) of Norwich, the *vicarage* of the parish church of Theberton then vacant was taxed at 40*s.* for first fruits of the same *vicarage*, on all future vacancies to be paid to the bishop and his successors." The Chancellor proceeded to decree "the said *vicarage* to consist of altarages of the church (offerings and perhaps small tithes) *reserving to the bishop and his successors power*

to augment the portion of the vicar; and an enquiry was directed as to the value of the altarages ; and Sir John Marche priest was personally instituted by the Chancellor, into the *vicarage,* on the presentation of the religious men the abbot and convent of Leyston, being the true patrons."

The living had been a rectory—certainly since 1408 ; and yet forsooth, in 1452, the monks hoped by help of the Chancellor—by what arguments persuaded we can only surmise—to recover their former rectorial rights ; and in future to present vicars, not rectors, to Theberton !

Audacity succeeds sometimes, but this silly attempt was too barefaced. John Marche could not be, and in fact was never, instituted. Neither he nor any person could lawfully have been made, or recognised as *vicar* of Theberton.

1456 saw a fresh hand at the helm of Leyston. The new abbot was John Sprotling ; and in the first year of his abbacy, the Abbot and Convent presented one John Herberd or Herbert presbiter, to, of course, "the parish church—rectory, not vicarage, of Theberton."

This was the rector to whom Agnes Field had bequeathed the green cloak. He died in 1488. By his will, written in Latin, he describes himself as rector of "Thebyrton" and thus proceeds :—

"I leave my soul to God Almighty, the blessed Mary, and all the Saints, and my body to be buried in the church or chancel of Thebyrton. I leave to the aforesaid church, a missal, a vestment, a psalter, a processionary, and a surplice, upon this condition, that the parish shall find a secular priest to celebrate in the said church for half a year, and he to have for his salary five marks. I leave to Sir Thomas Grene a portifory,[1] on condition that he

[1] "Portiforium," a service book—breviary.

shall celebrate in the said church for a quarter of a year, for my soul and for the souls of my benefactors. I leave to the said Thomas my best cloak. I give to Robert Man of Thebyrton a gown, and to Isabell his wife another gown. The residue not disposed of I leave to the disposition of Edmund Jenney Esqre, and Sir Robert Rowe, to dispose as may best please God and my soul's health."

In 1488, Henricus Guerdon, or Everdon, was, by the same patrons, presented to the rectory, and was thereafter canonically instituted to the parish church. In this case, special care was taken to leave no crevice for doubt, for besides the words "to the parish church," the word "Rector" was used; moreover, the vacancy was described as upon the death of John Herberd "last rector."

The next rector was Thomas Went, priest, and canon of the abbey. He was admitted in 1504, by the somewhat notorious Bishop Nix of Norwich, to the parochial church of Theberton, and the words of this institution again were *ac, te Rectorem in eadem canonice instituimus.* Thomas Went died rector of Theberton.

He, and those he ministered to, lived in a splendid period—the time of the awakening of a new world. Some rumours of the fame of it must have reached even Theberton, for one of the prophets of the religious renaissance was Colet, then rector of Dennington a parish but twelve miles distant, who was a friend of Erasmus. He afterwards became Dean of St. Paul's, and founded a great grammar school hard by his cathedral, which is St. Paul's School still. Dean Colet's plans must have fluttered the Pharisees, seeming to them, Sir Thomas More told the Dean, "like the wooden horse in which armed Greeks were hid for the ruin of barbarous Troy"; for his design was nothing less, than to teach boys rational religion and sound learning, and to discard the scholastic logic.

Brother Thomas can hardly have failed to imbibe the narrow prejudices of the cloister; but then again, his later life as rector of Theberton may have opened his mind to the true beauty of the new teaching. Colet had placed over the master's chair in St. Paul's school, an image of the Child Jesus, with the words "Hear ye Him." Pleasant it is, to imagine our parson preaching from that text to his flock at Theberton.

It was indeed a time of wondrous growth and change; and that not only in religious life. All works of man: literature, discovery, arts, handicrafts, sprang at a bound into maturity.

Perhaps, our simple country folk would feel no innovation more nearly than the threatened revolution in their weapons. The bow, from immemorial time, had been the tried and trusted arm of Englishmen: now the talk was, that smoking gunpowder and leaden balls would supersede good yeomanly bows and arrows. The change was to arrive later, but as yet, it was an open question whether, the clumsy caliver would really be more effective in war, than the English long bow. Lord Herbert thus stated the relative merits of the two arms:—"When he that carries the caleever goes unarmed (without defensive armour) the arrow will have the same effect within its distance as the bullet, and can again for one shot return two. Besides, as they use halberts with the bow, (a man armed with a caliver could carry no weapon besides) they could fall to, to execute on the enemy with great advantage. I cannot deny but against the pike they were of less force than the caleevers."

In 1514, Parliament gave judgment, for the bow and against the caliver. It made perpetual an old statute concerning archery, and forbad the use of "hand guns" to all men who had not five hundred marks a

year, an income considerable at that time, equivalent to more than £300 now.[1] All men under forty, were by law to possess bows and arrows and to practise shooting, and butts were to be erected in every village.

So there must have been butts at Theberton, at which men used to practise archery. If every young man now possessed a magazine rifle, and with it practised marksmanship, we should be freed from the degrading fear of invasion.

[1] The qualification was reduced to £100 the next year.

CHAPTER VI

To Thomas Went, succeeded as rector of Theberton "Robert Folkelynge capellanus," chaplain perhaps of some forgotten guild, it might be that of St. John at Kelshall. He was presented in 1518 by the Abbot and Convent of Leyston, and instituted as before.

This rector's name appears in the last will dated in 1523, of one of his parishioners. John Kylham willed that his body should lie in the churchyard of St. Peter of Theberton, he further willed "that Robert Folklyn have XXd. to pray for me and for my friends V masses of the wounds of our Lord."

Probably John was a kinsman of another Kylham—Richard, who by his will of the same date, left "XXd. to the High Altar of our church, for tithe negligently forgotten." Did he hope that this might save his soul from the evil smells of purgatory? Turchill, an Essex husbandman, had in a vision seen the entrance into hell, whence was exhaled a smoke of most foul stench; which arose from tithes unjustly detained and crops unjustly tithed.

Richard Kylham also bequeathed "a peyer of shaileys" to our church. Whether the church ever received the Chalices, or what has become of them, I have found no record; they may have been sold since for parochial purposes.

Church plate we know was sold from Middleton: for under date 1547, we have the "true certificate" of four churchwardens there, that they, "with consent of the town, hathe solde ij peyer of silver sensors, ij peyer of Chalys, and 1 pax—price XIII^{li}. VII^{s}." (say £130 of our money); and that they bought with the proceeds "grownde for to enlarge the weys in the town," and paid for "kepyng of a pore chylde," and also for "settyng forth of certen soldgers," and further for "mendyng Medylton Brigge," (where was this bridge?), and lastly for "mendyng a lane ledyng from Yoxforth to Theberton" —the "meadow lane" before alluded to. The sale was prudent and well-timed, for only six years after, in 1553, churchwardens had to produce to commissioners then sitting at Ipswich, all their church plate and ornaments and church bells, "grete belles and saunce (sanctus) belles in the steples, only excepte"; to be sold "for God's glory and the king's honour"; only the commissioners had authority to leave one or two chalices at their discretion.

Robert Folkelynge held the benefice for twelve years, resigning it in 1530 in favour of another Robert Folkelynge, described as junior, who paid a yearly pension of 40*s*. to Robert Folkelynge senior for the remainder of his life. Farmers sometimes cheated this Robert the younger as they had his elder namesake; one James Maihewe, in 1539, left XIId. to the High Altar of Theberton for "tithes forgotten"; and the same testator evidently a farmer, also gave three bushels of wheat and five bushels of malt for reparation of our church; and after bequeathing live stock—"cows, stirks, and colts, neate, and cattell, calfe, and lamb," besides money, for benefit of his wife and children, directed "a combe of wheate to be baken, and the brede thereof to be distry-

butyde among the most needy persons in the parish of Theberton." "Robert Folkelyn parson of Theberton and Robert Gosse of the same town" were witnesses.

This Robert Folkelyn was a frequent witness to the wills of his parishioners. In 1545, we find him, described as parson of Theberton, witness to the will of John Alyn of Theberton; in 1551, as witness to the will of John Carsey also of Theberton, whereby that testator directed that, failing bequests for his children, his property be disposed of "in dedes of charity to the most honour of God and comfort to his soul."

In Robert Folkelyn junior's time, dispute arose concerning lands in Theberton, between two bodies of persons with both of whom he had intimate relations. On one side, a number of his parishioners, and on the other side, a religious house, who were influential neighbours and patrons of his benefice.

In the Star Chamber proceedings of the reign of Henry VIII. we find the following:—

To the King our Sovereign lord. Humbly complain unto your Highness your true liege men: John Grosse of Kelsale, John Ulffe of the same town, William Ulffe of Feberton (Theberton), Thomas Mannock of the same town, John Fryer, George Deer, John Grosse of Febyrton, Alexander Norman, Roberte Elmeham, Thomas Fraunceys, Richard Pecok, John Grey, John Byrde, John Clerke, and other inhabitants dwelling in the town and village of Theberton: that whereas they and their neighbours are seised of their several lands and tenements in Feberton aforesaid, and by reason thereof they and their ancestors have had free common of pasture appendant thereunto, in four several marsh land and hard land grounds, called the Fryth, and in other lands, marsh and heath, amounting to 700 acres

or thereabouts in Leyston and Feberton aforesaid, for pasture of their cattle and for mowing of "thakes"[1] and rysshes for the covering of their said tenements and houses; that this so continued till 21 July 25 Henry VIII (1533-4) when John Fereby clerk, Robert Fyske of Leyston clerk, being a white canon, Thomas Browne of Feberton yeoman, William Okey of Leyston, Henry Kechyn, William Symson of the same town, William Trusse of Pesenale cooper, Thomas Pryce of Leyston barber, Robert Shanke of Aldryngham husbandman, William Cuthbert of Leyston white canon, William Crispe of Leyston labourer, George Kendall of Leyston white canon, Robert Dawys of Medylton labourer, Robert Wyllet of the same town labourer, William Gylberde of Leyston butcher, James Morce of Leyston labourer, William Cache of Leyston carpenter, with other evil disposed persons to the number of twenty-three, servants to George Carleton Abbot of Leyston, with swords and bucklers daggers and quarter staves, assembled at Therberton, and then and there, in riotous manner, did enter into all the said common pasture, and thereof wrongfully disseise your complainants to the use of the said Abbot; and did make assault and grievous affray on the said John Ulff and others, and carried off two loads of rushes, the goods of the said Thomas Fraunceys and Thomas Pawston. That of this riot, all the said misdoers, except the said abbot, are lawfully judged by the verdict of twelve true men within the county of Suffolk. And, because the said misdoers are the said abbot's servants, and by his "extorte power" are very like shortly and untruly to be acquitted, unless the king's favour be shewn in that behalf, the com-

[1] Thatch and thatchers are still "thak" and "thakkers" in Suffolk speech.

plainants beg a writ of subpœna to be directed to the Justices of the Peace in the county of Suffolk, commanding them to send up to the Star Chamber all the said indictments against the said misdoers; and to summon the said Abbot, Thomas Browne, Thomas Perce (Pryce), Robert Fyske, and William Crispe, to appear there and answer in person.

The abbot, by his answer, denied the truth of the complaint, and said that such matter would be determinable at common law. Moreover, that he and his predecessors, time out of mind, had been seised of the marshes and grounds named in the bill, in right of their monastery, and that the complainants never had rights of common there.

Concerning the merits of this dispute we cannot form an opinion, there is no evidence; but it does not seem probable that costly proceedings would ever have been promoted on behalf of these poor people, unless upon advice that they had a case good enough to give hope of success.

Mischievous was the precedent set by Abbot Clement for this his latest successor. George Carleton's chair was shaking under him, yet he could not refrain from violence. To make an "assault and grievous affray," with a force of twenty-three men—three tonsured canons among them—armed with swords and bucklers, daggers, and quarter staves, could not be deemed seemly for a father of religious.

It is not without interest to trace the social position of the men who took part for and against Abbot Carleton. A subsidy return, which had been made in 1524, enables us in that respect; for each parish, it gives the names of all taxable men, and the amounts of their incomes, in either land or goods, whichever was highest.

All those to be mentioned were taxed for goods: Among the Abbot's men Henry Kechyn of Leyston had £3 a year, Robert Shanke of Aldringham £6, Robert Wyllet of Middleton £6, and William Trusse of Peasenale £2. The petitioners, against the Abbot, John Byrd, John Grosse, Thomas Fraunceys, John Fryer, Richard Pecok, John Clerke, had from £1, to, in one case that of Fryer, £4 a year. Alexander Norman, William Ulff, Thomas Pauston, and John Grey earned £1 a year in wages. All these belonged to Theberton. Another John Grosse was richest of all with £12 of income ; he belonged to Kelsale.

Some indication of their relative positions is afforded by comparing these incomes with that of "John Jenney Esquyer" set down in the Return at £26. 13*s.* 4*d.* "in goods."

I wish we had better knowledge of the topography. I confess I cannot, with accurate finger, point out the four marsh land and hard land grounds then called the Fryth—the name is unknown now—nor can I describe the 700 acres.

The decrees of the court of Star Chamber are all missing, and we could never have known what was decided, but for a later suit in Edward VI.'s time, with which we shall deal later on.

Abbot Carleton had been defending his claims by armed force. Only three years were to elapse, before his power, himself, and his abbey, were to be overwhelmed together by a final catastrophe. The great house, a thing of always, rooted in men's imagination as an immemorial oak, was to be uprooted.

A revolutionary change for Theberton! The familiar figures of the canons would be seen no longer about the lanes and paths of the parish ; the abbey church would

no more re-echo their chants and litanies; the poor and needy would lose the brethren's never-failing alms; the sick would no more benefit by the medical skill and charity of monkish leeches; children would no longer be taught; and tenants would lose their good old landlords, who had so often stood "between poor men and the devil"—it always had been "good living under the crook." There was ground for fear that their lay successors would raise the rents of farms, even of cottages.

True it is, that the fate of the monasteries was inevitable—envied owners of one-fifth to one-third, so say the authorities, of all the land of the country, and patrons, appropriators, of countless rectories.

Langland, in Piers Plowman, had in the fourteenth century foretold the fall of religious houses at the hand of a king; and Erasmus seeing the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket, had declared that those who had heaped up such a mass of treasure, would one day be plundered. The air had long been full of mutterings presaging storms to come. Moreover, with this tempting wealth under his feet, Henry VIII. was now in sore straits for money; his wars with both France and Scotland, and his reckless extravagance, had exhausted the hoards his thrifty father had laid up for him.

He had had already to resort to unpopular expedients; in 1524, all men worth £40 had been required to pay in one lump sum a subsidy properly spread over four years; which had proved so insupportable, Speed says, "to the poorer sort of subjects, that payment was, with weepings and cursings, utterly denied to collectors, almost provoking open rebellion." Suffolk indeed had taken arms, making "poverty their captain." In 1526 again, when commissioners were sent to levy the sixth

part of the goods of all laymen, and the fourth part of the clergy's, the discontent was so great, that the king had to disavow the tax, and despatch letters through England, that he would ask nothing but by way of benevolence.

The blow no doubt had long been impending; yet it can hardly be, that so fell an outrage upon the rights of property did not come like an earthquake shock at last.

Royal commissioners, Sir Thomas Russhe, Richard Southwell, and Thomas Myldemay, had made an inventory of the plate and other valuables used for religious services, together with the household goods and farming stock—all the movable property—of the House of Leyston; and had delivered these goods to the keeping of the abbot, for use and behoof of "the lord the King." That "advocate and kinsman of the poor" did not get very much. Only goods appraised (we have the inventory) at £42. 16*s.* 3*d.*, equivalent to say £420 of our money, was secured for His Majesty from the clutches of lesser robbers.

The first result of the Dissolution in country parishes was an outbreak of lawless violence. The honoured fabrics were given up to pillage. The King's command was, in all cases, to "pull down to the ground the walls of the churches, steeples, cloisters, frateries, dorters, (common sleeping rooms), chapter houses, and all other houses, saving those necessary for farmers;" and faithfully, too faithfully, alas, was it obeyed. I have no evidence concerning Leiston in particular, but we read that, throughout England, the mean folk gathered greedily about their prey, and that, so long as "door window iron or glass or lead, remained to be plundered, raingeing rabblements of rascals" could hardly be driven away. One can imagine the spoilers tearing up

To Sir Gerard Vanneck of Hoxne in the County of Suffolk Bart. and Member of Parliament for the Borough of [illegible] this Plate of LEISTON ABBEY is most humbly Inscribed

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"the seats in the choir, and melting the lead therewithall, till all things of value were spoiled, carried away and defaced to the uttermost."

The poor rector of Theberton, Robert Folkelyn had good reason, we cannot doubt, to blush with shame for his parishioners.

Not much of either the original abbey which Glanvil built, nor of the third abbey, seems to have been thought "necessary for farmers," for little was preserved. Glanvil's old house, before (not long before) the Suppression had been deserted by the brethren; it only sheltered a hermit, a former abbot of Leyston, John Grene, who in 1531 "of his own will relinquishing his Abbacy, was consecrated a hermit at the chapel of St. Mary in the old convent near the sea." And there tradition says he died and was buried. And of the third abbey little was saved, besides its walls, which for generations after served as a mine for highway surveyors.

Of the later life of Robert Folkelyn we know little. In 1549, I find that he held land of the manor of Middleton-Fordley. In 1553, the year of Mary's accession, a mandate was issued for the induction of one William Stephenson. Stephenson ought to have been first instituted, but I cannot find that he ever was, in fact, either instituted or inducted. Folkelyn seems to have resigned his living, or, possibly having married under the Act of 1548 was ejected in 1553 or 1554. In the Diocesan Registry of Visitations, marked in pencil "1554–1566" we find his name with the description "presbiter," under that of his successor Johannes Maysteman described as "Rector." Perhaps, after vacating his living he stayed on at Theberton, as I find his name as a landowner of the parish in 1561. This is the last we know of him, his death is not recorded in the register.

Great alterations in churches and church worship were brought about during the brief reign of Edward VI. Henry VIII. had prohibited all under the degree of gentleman and gentlewoman from reading the Scriptures. Edward VI. ordered the bible of the largest volume in English, and the Paraphrase of Erasmus upon the gospels—in translating which it is noteworthy that both Queen Katharine and the Lady Mary had assisted—to be placed in churches, so that the parishioners might resort thither and read them. Happily our church's copy of the Paraphrase is preserved still. From time beyond men's memories there had stood a stone altar at the east end of Theberton Church; no doubt the order to demolish it had been obeyed, and a wooden table, which the communicants sat round, was placed in the middle of the nave. All images were defaced under an Act of Parliament. The use of the Protestant liturgy, and attendance at the new services, were enforced by law. The holy Sacrament was to be ministered to the people in both kinds, bread and wine; this "being more comformable," as the Act expressed it, "to the common use and practice of the Apostles and primitive church by the space of five hundred years after Christ's Ascension."

Confusion and irregularities were general for a long time, of which parishes adjacent to Theberton supply some evidence. In 1597, one Deyntery the curate of Leyston, not appearing at a bishop's visitation, was excommunicated, because "he weareth not the surplis, he doth not catechize the youth, he hath not walked the perambulations." In the same year, at Middleton, a "meere laye-man readeth Divine service." At Kelshall (now corruptly called Kelsale), they "had not moneth (month) sermondes." The rector—Brood by name—

"doth not catechize the yowth, he went not the perambulations." Brood said he was ready to catechize, "but for that they come not to him"; he was warned to amend his faults. At Westleton, Elizabeth Bedingfield widow and Master Francis Bedingfield, not having received the communion there for twelve months, were excommunicated; and may be were prosecuted afterwards as recusants.

It was then a parson's duty to "walk the perambulation." The Rogation Day's processions, with banners, bells, lights and so forth, had been discontinued at the Reformation, but parish perambulations were now required by law. Elizabeth had enjoined the people, once in the year, with the curate to walk round their parish as they were accustomed, and at their return to the church, to make there their common prayers. And the curate was, at certain convenient places, to admonish the people, and give thanks to God, as they beheld His benefits, and for the increase and abundance of the fruits of the earth. The 104th Psalm had to be said, and the minister was to inculcate such sentences as: "Cursed be he which translateth the bounds and dolles of his neighbour."

1554, John Masterman, or Maysteman, or Maysterman, was instituted to the Rectory of Theberton; Robert Browne, described as one of the barons of the Lady Queen, having presented him. How Browne acquired the right is rather interesting. It seems that George Carleton last abbot of Leyston had granted his next presentation to one John Compton; Compton had died leaving Thomas Whight his executor, and Browne had acquired this presentation from Whight. It may be that with the break up of his House in prospect, Carleton, during the last years of his abbacy, had made friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, and sold the

next presentation to John Compton, and that the crown had recognised that sale, and was content to take subject to it. At all events, the title, neither of Browne nor of Masterman, was ever, so far as we know, brought in question. Browne was a lessee from the Crown of the site of the ancient abbey by the sea, of a warren of conies of two miles' compass, and of five hundred acres of marsh land, all late the property of the community; and he was also owner, as purchaser from the Crown, of the site and the demesne lands of the great third abbey.

It was against this Robert Browne, lessee from the Crown and owner of Abbey lands, that certain "poor tenants of the soke of Leyston" commenced in Edward VI.'s time, the later suit that has been referred to.

The soke of Leiston! "Manor and lordship" are familiar expressions, but not so familiar now is the word "soke." Until its forced surrender to the Crown, the abbots had been lords of the manor or lordship of Leyston, and their jurisdiction, for a long time—at all events from 1327 when it was rated for a subsidy under that name—had been known also as a soke. There were and are other Ecclesiastical jurisdictions called sokes: great sokes for example of Peterborough and Southwell, and of the Bishops of Winchester and London, and nearer home there was one at Thetford. Peterborough was under no county Lord Lieutenant, but had its own Custos Rotulorum and separate Commission of the Peace. To the soke of Southwell twenty "touns" were subject, and the Archbishops of York appointed both its Custos Rotulorum and justices. Thetford had, I think, its own magistracy distinct from the county.

I know of no such special privileges of this soke of

Leyston. The abbot as lord of the soke, had his own court in which his bailiff presided, and his own constable, his own stocks and prison, and his own gallows. He would, independently of the Hundred Court of Blything, appoint in his Court Leet an ale-taster, who would see that the ale sold in his Liberty was "fit for man's body," and likewise that the bread was of good weight. All freeholders within the soke were bound to attend the Courts Leet held once a year, and so also were all persons who, the term was, were "commorant,"—usually sleeping—therein

The soke comprised one hundred and ninety-one tenants and tenantries, besides the "hanborowes" [1] who had been accustomed to come to the manorial courts; and it extended into our parish, in which there are still many tenements holden of the Leyston manor. Some of the "certain poor tenants" therefore must have been parishioners of Theberton. Among the matters of complaint were alleged acts of waste in woods of the lordship described as within a mile of the sea, out of which, in the six or seven years last past, it was said that over four hundred oaks meet for ship timber had been taken. The complainants then referred to the former suit in the Star Chamber, concerning rights of pasture, over, it was now said, five hundred acres. They stated that it had pleased the late King Henry VIII. to appoint certain gentlemen to sit in commission, to set an indifferent end upon the matter in variance; that the commission sat accordingly, and that it was agreed that the inhabitants of "Feverton" should have the use of sixty

[1] This curious word "hanborowes" is, as Professor Skeat has kindly pointed out to me, a variant of "handborowes"; fully explained in the New English Dictionary, which has: "lit. hand-pledge or security, a name for one (or each) of the nine sureties associated with the 'head-borow' in a frank-pledge."

acres only, whereas from time immemorial they had enjoyed a moiety of the said five hundred acres, the tenants of Layston enjoying the other moiety. That now, the tenants of Layston and Feverton enjoyed between them only about one hundred and forty to one hundred and sixty acres, and that the said Robert Browne kept the residue in his own hands.

The answer of the defendant Robert Browne was that :— As for the claim of the tenants of Theberton to pasture over five hundred acres of what had been the demesne of the Monastery ; as far as he could learn they had no title in law, nor had ever had any right. In the abbot's time, the tenants were allowed to send certain of their cattle on to the soft or marsh grounds belonging to the Abbey, and to take rushes from the marshes for their thatch. If any of the inhabitants' beasts happened to feed on the hard lands of the Abbey, the abbot used to distrain for damage. Browne further stated that the Commissioners, Sir John Jerningham knight, and Edmund Rous Esqre., had examined both the ground and the witnesses, and, by agreement, set stakes and marks where the inhabitants should make a ditch in the said marsh, thereby enclosing a parcel thereof to themselves.

Of what happened further in this matter we have no knowledge ; but it will be seen later on that the poor folk of Theberton exercised common rights in a large area of marsh and fen down to a recent period.

CHAPTER VII

In 1606, there was a tragedy in the Browne family. Agnes the wife of John Browne son or grandson of Robert Browne, murdered her husband; and, Suckling says that one Peter their servant was gibbeted for the crime. What happened to Agnes we do not know; we have depositions, taken upon an enquiry as to the King's right to her goods, which shows that she had been condemned as a felon. The gibbet on which Peter was executed was the manorial gibbet of the manor of Leiston, the site of which according to a perambulation of that manor, made in 1620, may be found :—by following "the brook between Thorpe and Haslewood manors, until you come unto Friday Market Heath, and then, leaving the water-course, following the hedge south-west until you come next a green way," which will be "beyond the gibbet." I hope this may make the position clear to my local readers. It is not at all clear to me.

John Masterman lived all through Mary's reign, that bloody time of inhuman persecution in the desecrated name of our holy religion. It was in the first year of his incumbency that, most likely he as well as others from Theberton, trudged the three miles along the "meadow lane," to see the martyrdom of Roger Coo,

who, "an aged father," was "cruelly committed to the fire at Yoxford where he most blessedly ended his years in 1555."

Conceive it, now in these good days of religious equality when all Englishmen are free to obey their consciences, that Christian folk could have stood tamely by, to see an innocent old man burned to death at the stake, with horrible torments; only because he refused to admit the doctrine of the Real Presence.

Whether Masterman was at heart a "bitter Papist," we do not know, but we know this, that he read the Liturgy in the vulgar tongue, did not oppose the again taking down of images, and when the oath of supremacy was in the first year of Queen Elizabeth tendered to him, he did not refuse to take it. Deprivation would have followed refusal; the fact is, however, that he held the living until his death, for in 1570, we find the institution of his successor, Robert Page clerk, *per mortem ultimi Rectoris sive Incumbentis*. Why the last words *sive Incumbentis* were used, I am not able to expain.

It was during Masterman's time, that in a letter to Archbishop Parker, signed by "Robert Wingfield, Wyllyam Caundysh, Wym. Hopton, Thomas Colbyn of Beckles (who built Roos Hall) and Thomas Playter," all persons of eminence in Suffolk, it was alleged that there was not one preacher (query licensed preacher) in a great circuit, viz.: from Blythburgh to Ipswich which is twenty miles distant and ten miles in breadth along the sea coast!

Thomas Cromwell well-named *malleus monachorum*, a blacksmith's son, had succeeded the Ipswich grazier's son, and was now the King's Vicar General. In 1538, he commanded that all parishes should keep registers

of christenings, marriages, and burials; but not till ten years after was this done at Theberton. Our first register dates from 1548. In 1597, registers having been kept carelessly, Convocation issued an injunction confirmed by Queen Elizabeth, that copies into new books should be made of the existing registers, and that each page of the new books should be attested by the signatures of incumbents and of churchwardens.

The first book of our register, which is a copy made pursuant to the injunction, begins thus:—"M^{m} y^{t} this Register Book was maid in the yeare of our Lord God 1598, and y^{t} Conteyneth the Christeninges, marriages, and burialles from the yeare of our Lord God 1548, which were in this toune of Theberton in the Countie of Suff." And the subsequent pages were duly signed at foot by the then incumbent "Reighnald Plumer as minister or parson there," who will be referred to later.

I have myself, with help for the oldest and most crabbed hand-writings, read all our parish registers, but cannot ask readers to follow me through tedious lists of names, to which no possible interest attaches. There are a few such entries as:—

In 1559, "a certaine travellinge man which died at Eastbridge," was buried.

In 1563 "Robert Adams, son of Nycholas was drouned in a pit and burried."

The original book had indeed been negligently kept. For some years no entries at all were made; and in the copy is now and again written:—Such a year "is wantynge in the ould Regester booke."

In 1574, occurs the first entry relating to the Jenney family:—"M^{ris}. Anne Jenney, the doughter of Arthur Jenney Esquier, bapt. 18 Aprill." Arthur Jenney was to inherit the manor of Theberton, and to hold his first

court in 1590. He had been preceded by ancestors of whom some have made their appearance already. Sir William, of Doonwych's time, a judge of the King's Bench, and Sir Edmund the donee of "one buk" from Framlingham, will be remembered.

Arthur Jenney was buried here in 1604, and Christopher his younger brother in 1609, but no monuments of either remain. The family continued to hold the manor till the last years of the seventeenth century.

At this time, the Jenneys were an unhappy family. In 1584, when Arthur Jenney was living at Theberton, his father Francis Jenney of Knoddishall a parish three miles off, was an old man of seventy-four. Against him and one Thomas Okeley as co-defendant, Arthur instituted a suit in Chancery. He stated that his father was tenant for life, with remainder to himself, of a certain park and grounds adjoining, called Theberton Park, with divers other lands and tenements; that his father being very aged, and the house and buildings at Theberton very ruinous and in great decay, his father induced him to take the premises on lease; and that he, upon hope of the fatherly good-will and liking of his father, had upon entreaty been content to remove his dwelling from Norfolk, and to take the said park and lands on lease for twenty-one years should his father so long live, at a rent of £220, the lease being dated in 1566. Arthur, and one John Jernegan (his wife's name had been Elye Jernegan) had become bound in £400 for payment of the rent.

Francis Jenney the father, by his answer, said that all Arthur's statements were most false and untrue, devised only to vex and trouble him, and thereby to shorten his days if that were possible; that Arthur advised by the Duchess of Suffolk and other friends, had solicited the lease; and that, though dissuaded by his own friends

as it would be committing the greatest part of his living into his son's hands, he did in fact make the lease as stated; that his son did not pay the rent; that he had gently sought to obtain it, but would not put the matter in controversy in his old age; and further, that the surety Jernegan had fallen into great decay, and was not of ability to satisfy his bond.

The other defendant Thomas Okely in his answer alleged that the suit had been devised by Arthur and his father on purpose to put him to vexation; and that they also had "set towards him Christopher Jenney," the younger brother, "a very malicious person."

Arthur filed a replication, stating that for eleven or twelve years he had endeavoured to get the matter peaceably settled by reference to friends; that he had, since his years of discretion, always been as dutiful to his father as any son he had—which was not saying much, for he added that the extremities he endured at the hands of his father came not of his father himself, but by evil counsel, lewd advice, and practices, of Christopher his own younger brother.

I find other references of about the same date to the old park, and mention of the hall, of Theberton. In a Particular of the Manor, is described "the Seate of the Manor called Thebarton Halle with the Parke lying in Theberton and Fordlye,[1] beinge well builded, with a gardine, orchard, meadowes, pastures, and earable (arable) lands, woods, timbers, and underwoods." Besides the "halle" there is mentioned, among other lands occupied by the lord of the manor on the farm then called Park Closes, "one close called Whinney Close containing 20

[1] Can this be the park in Fordley, before referred to as described on the rolls of that Manor? There is presumptive evidence that at this time the Theberton park contained no deer, but was under tillage.

acres," also "one Mansion House with a brickell (brick kiln) and house, with the close called More Close." The road now the "hall road," was then known as More or Moor Lane. It is probable that the wood now called the "Whin covert" occupies part of Whinney Close, and that the "Mansion House with a brickell" stood on the site of the wood now "Kiln or Kell Grove." The Particular bears no date, but it refers to the reign of Mary as seemingly recent, and to acts as lord of the manor, of Francis Jenney, who I take it was the Francis of Knodishall defendant in the Chancery suit.

We read also of a "Park House" in Theberton. There is this entry in our Register for 1587: "John Neele, which was slaine by ye cavinge of the grounde in Mr. Jenney's well at the parck house in theberton, was buried the 21 Daie of Auguste." This Mr. Jenney must have been Arthur, who was living upon the property demised to him by his father.

The Moor lane or Hall road had then wider grassy margins than now, for "the several feadings of the Highways leading from Theberton Hall to the Kelshall closes and meadows" appertaining to the manor, were put at five acres.

The "rents of assize free or bond of the manor, with daies works, rente henns, and other services by the yeare" were set at £3. 1*s.* 10*d.* The present lord of the manor has never received either the days' works, rent hens, or other services, or any part of the £3. 1*s.* 10*d.*, and fears that they are gone beyond recovery.

In 1574, Robert Page then rector, quaintly described as "old parson of Theberton," and Margaret Hooe were married the last day of March. Page's successor Reignald Plummer, the copyist of this part of the register, must lie under suspicion of having added the "old."

In 1578, we find the first mention of the Inghams—inhabitants of Theberton for centuries—"Katharaine Ingam the doughter of Thomas was baptized ye 2nd of March." In later years, both this name and the old name of Jenney recurs in the register too often to be repeated.

In 1584, "Thomas Smith curate of Theberton was buried." Either he was a curate of Robert Page, or, which I think more probable, was, on the death of Page, the date of which I do not know, serving the cure pending a new appointment to the Rectory.

In 1585, Reignald or Reighnald or Reginald Plummer, M.A., was instituted to the parish church, vacant by the death of the last rector.

About this incumbent I have gleaned a few notices.

At the Easter visitation of 1597, the outgoing wardens, whose names are in the register, Robert Beare and Roger Clemence, presented that "the parsonage howses are somewhat decayed" adding, however, that "he (Plummer) preacheth everye Sondaye." Plummer appeared, and objected that the houses had been repaired in part, adding, rather superfluously, one might think, that he was a master of arts![1] One Thwayte swore that all the "decayes" had been repaired by him, but there had been some "decayes" since, by reason of a "tempest and bigg wynde."

The churchwardens were themselves presented, for

[1] He evidently desired to make it clear that he was not what Fuller called a "mean minister." Mr. Ditchfield, in his "Old Time Parson," says that in the Archdeaconry of St. Alban's, ministers not preachers (I think he means licensed preachers) or masters of arts, had to be examined periodically as to their competence by the archdeacon, or the judge of his Court. One vicar was dull and "not competent," but he afterwards improved, obtained a licence, and was reported to be preaching "painfully and diligently in his parish."

that a silver cover for the communion cup was a-wanting ; and they, not appearing, were then and there excommunicated. Beare appeared afterwards, and was ordered to provide a cover before Christmas, and that was done.

The church still possesses a chalice, said to date from 1574.

In 1603, the Bishop (Jegon) of Norwich, in pursuance of directions from the Archbishop, required a return from each parish in his diocese, of the number of communicants, the number of recusants and non-receivers of communion, and as to any other benefice held by the incumbent. According to Plummer's return, there were one hundred and twenty communicants, no recusants, no non-receivers of communion in Theberton ; and he added that he served an impropriation—another cure, at the stipend of £10 a-year.

As communion was compulsory, the return proves that one hundred and twenty was then about the adult population of our parish.

It was the impropriate church of Middleton that Plummer, certainly from 1603 to 1606, and I think during other years, was serving as curate. In 1606, he was presented for baptizing the child of a woman, a stranger in that parish, which he denied (why should not he have baptized it), and was warned for not "catechizing on Sondaye."

Good Parson Plummer need not have indulged in sarcasm on his predecessor for marrying—Reighnold himself and his wife Issabel had seventeen children whose names are in the register. Fortunately for them agriculture and all the country trades which feed upon and are fed by that great mother of industries, were just then prosperous ; for though out of the seventeen only seven survived, those seven had to be clothed and educated

and put out in the world. Thomas Tusser, who farmed for a time at Cattawade on the Essex edge of our county, though a professor of detail, and as a Solomon to teach others, and careful and prudent withal, found that his own sad lot was as he wrote

> In Suffolk soil
> . . .
> For hope of pelf like worldly elf
> To moil and toil
> To cark and care and even bare
> With loss of pain to little gain.

He failed—perhaps too much the gentleman, but the home-bred farmers, sons of the soil, were generally prosperous. It is the fact that rents had risen ; but still Harrison says that whereas "they were scarce able in former times to live and pay their rent without selling of a cow or a horse or more," now, although "four pound of old rent be improved to forty or fifty pound, yet will the farmer think his gain very small toward the midst of his term, if he have not six or seven years rent lying by him therewith to purchase a new lease."

Striking too was the improvement about this date in the standard of living. "So common," we read, "were all sorts of treene (wooden) vessels in old time, that a man should hardly find four pieces of pewter in a good farmer's house"; whereas, in this his own time, Harrison tells us, the farmer would have "a fair garnish of pewter on his cowboard (cupboard), three or four feather beds, so many coverlets and carpets of tapestry, a silver salte, a bowle for wine—if not a whole nest—and a dosen of spoons, to furnish up the sute."

Here is an actual list of all the belongings—furniture implements and stock—left by a small farmer of our parish of Theberton in 1582, with the value set upon every article.

"Anŏ Dmĭ 1582

"An Invetorye of the goods and chattals of Wyllām Geads of ffeaberton in the Countye of Suff. husbondman deciseassed, made the thirde daye of november in the yere of the Raigne of our Soveraigne Ladye Elyzabethe Queene of Inglond ffraunce and Irelond Defendor of the faythe &c. 24th. prised by us Thomas Syer, Robertt ffrenche, Robert Baker, Henry Hill, and Thomas Base.

	s.	*d.*
In primis his aparell	13	4
Itm one payer of tongs, two cobirons, a gridiron, a fierpane, and two hayles (*a*)	3	0
Itm fower chaiers, one dresser and forme, and a little stole	2	0
Itm one table planke (*b*)	2	0
Itm in pewter 15 peces, fyve saults, one morter and a pestle, two canstacks (*c*) and a grater	10	0
Itm 6 chossens (*d*)	0	20
Itm in brase 7 kettles, one pott, towe skelletts (*e*) a frien pane, a skomer (*e*) and a spiett (*e*)	26	0
Itm one flock bed as it stand ther, one covering with hangings therto	10	0
Itm two ould Koffers	2	0
Itm another flockbed as it stand wth a coveringe and hangings therto	10	0
Itm 6 pillows	6	8
Itm 2 Koffers	2	6
Itm in ale vessells thre, two potts, treninge (*f*) dysshes, treninge spones, and treninge platters, and trenchers	2	0
Itm one featherbed as it stand in the chamber, wth the hangings therto belonging and two coverings	25	8
Itm in chese thre qrters	20	0
Itm 14 payer of shetts 6 pillowberes (*g*), fower table clothes, fower table napkings, wth the rest of the other Linninge	40	0
Itm half a come (*h*) of Wheat	4	0
Itm 40 pound wole	5	0
Itm 8 li. hempe	0	16

(*a*) An iron contrivance to hang a pot over the fire, from the Dan. *hale* originally a tail—see Eng. Dialect Dictionary.
(*b*) For trestles.
(*c*) Candlesticks.
(*d*) Cushions.
(*e*) Small kettles or boilers. Skimmer. Spit.
(*f*) Wooden.
(*g*) Pillow cases.
(*h*) Coomb.

	li.	*s.*	*d.*
Itm̃ 2 potts of buttur		2	0
Itm̃ in mathocks, sicles, pick forks, hoks, hatchetts, and wimbles (*i*), wth other iron		6	8
Itm̃ one chese prese, 9 bowles, 4 kelers (*j*), one charne (*k*), thre fatts, and a tube		20	0
Itm̃ two fanes, two skepes		3	0
Itm̃ a payer of querns, one towcome (*l*), a passhell (*m*) and thre payles		3	4
Itm̃ in gysse, duxe and henes		8	0
Itm̃ the corne in the Barne, with the Haye ther	10	0	0
Itm̃ one haye stake		13	4
Itm̃ the wheat one the ground		30	0
Itm̃ one cartte, one ploughe, the carte trayse (*n*) wth counters and sheres therto, collers and Dudfens (*o*), two panells, one cart sadle, one bridle, and a payer of harrous		20	0
Itm̃ the hempe unpilled		5	0
Itm̃ two sythes, one iron Rake		4	0
Itm̃ thre of the best mylche neat (*p*), the w^ch^ are gyven to the children	5	0	0
Itm̃ fyve other mylche neat	6	13	8
Itm̃ two buds (*q*)		30	0
Itm̃ one kalf		5	0
Itm̃ thre mares	4	0	0
Itm̃ thre Lambs		7	0
Itm̃ two hogs, one sowe, and sijxe Shotts (*r*)		33	4

li.	*s.*	*d.*
Some totalis 44	12	6.

Possibly Wyllyam Geads lived at the Church Farm house, the greater part of which certainly dates from Tudor days. The old messuage is yet little altered, nor can there be much alteration in its surroundings. It stands just off the road ; and from its windows, perhaps in Geads'

(*i*) Augers.
(*j*) Shallow wooden tubs for washing up. A word still used in Suffolk.
(*k*) Churn. Spelling characteristic of Suffolk pronunciation.
(*l*) For combing or dressing tow.
(*m*) Query pestle.
(*n*) Cart harness, the expression still used.
(*o*) Cart-horse bridle, word still in use.
(*p*) Milch cows. A cow stable is still called a neat-house.
(*q*) Young bullocks about a year old.
(*r*) Young pigs.

time latticed with thin strips of wood like dairy windows now, or filled with oiled linen, for glass was expensive, overlooks the three cottages across the road, as old possibly as itself; and is looked down upon by the ancient round tower of the church.

The now good road from Leiston to Yoxford, was then a "wikkede wey," deserving the statement in the Act of 1555 whereby the first surveyors had been appointed, that highways generally were "both very noisome, tedious to travel, and dangerous to passengers and carriages."

By carriages, of course was meant wheeled vehicles of every kind, farm carts for example; private carriages had but just come into use, and there were few of them. The Earl of Arundell is said to have owned the first coach two years before Geads' death in 1580.

In the village street southward of the church, no very old houses remain. Most prominent is the modern inn, the Lion. I find no record of an older inn on the same site; but the register for 1589 mentions an Eastbridge inn: —"Duncane Agnisse, a saylor of Southold which died at Eastbridge Inne, was buried the 22 of Marche." As this was the year following the Spanish Armada, and as Southwold had fitted out thirteen armed ships to fight the invaders, it is not unlikely that poor Duncane Agnisse had fought for his country in one of them.

With our parish accounts, as with our manor rolls, we are unfortunate. Had early accounts[1] been preserved, we should have found, no doubt, entries of charges for food and clothes and arms for soldiers; even without evidence, however, we may assume that men were

[1] All the parish accounts, not lost stolen or strayed, have lately been sorted, repaired, and bound in books, and are now in custody of the Parish Council.

THE CHURCH FARM.

trained here, as we know they were in neighbouring villages. Suffolk did what it could. One hundred and thirty-one Suffolk gentlemen contributed £3625. From Kelsale, one Lambert Nolloth subscribed £25, and Thomas Rivett of Brockford, an ancestor of mine, gave a like sum. No money was, so far as we know, sent from Theberton ; but when, some years later, 1599, "authority called footmen and horsemen out of the shire into the parts of Essex near London for defence of the court against secret purposes intended," we find our acquaintance Arthur Jenney contributing one horse for service of Her Majesty.

I wonder whether the old Eastbridge inn displayed a sign in the fifteen hundreds ; and, if so, how the painter depicted a thing so strange as an eel's foot, which the present beer-house is named after. In those days, when an inn-holder brewed the liquor he sold, surely the sign of an eel's foot in it would have been too significant of adulteration.

To adulterate the Englishman's barley wine—the "ryght goode ale which God sent us, a myghty drynke for the commune people," has always been held as sinful as sacrilege ; and has ever been punished by publicity. At the present day, an offender's name, upon a second conviction, is printed in the newspapers. In mediæval times, publicity was secured by means as effectual and more nasty. A brewer who tampered with ale, we had no hops then and no beer, was made a shameful spectacle—driven about public places in a dung cart. So far back as the thirteenth century this had been the practice, and it followed a yet more ancient precedent. The law was in the Conqueror's time, that *Malam cerevisiam faciens in cathedrâ ponebatur stercoris.*

The earliest but one of our former church bells was

dated 1594, and bore the arms of France and of England, the royal initials E. R., and the words *nos sumus instructi ad laudem Domini.* The late Dr. Raven told me that there had been an earlier bell dated 1553; and he records the dates of three others, two of 1614 and one 1663 by John Darbie.

CHAPTER VIII

GOOD old Tusser, who got no pelf from his Suffolk farming, has yet left us debtors for the treasures of his experience. His notable old saws, in doggerel rhyme to hold the memory, afford a life-like view of Elizabethan husbandry and housewifery. We see not only the year's work of such a husbandman as Wyllyam Geads, but also the wise indoor management of such a housewife as we may believe was Mistress Geads. Let me refer my readers to the book itself—the famous "Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry," of which the best edition is the reprint of 1812. A few slight quotations must suffice here.

Among the goods in Geads' inventory, as in most inventories of the time, was a parcel of hemp. In 1533, it had been enacted by Parliament, that all persons occupying sixty acres of arable land, should grow a quarter acre of hemp or flax every year. Under this Act, to all the larger holdings were attached "hemp lands"; and the word survives still as a field name, though its origin is almost, if not quite, forgotten.

Flax was harvested in July, for which month Tusser advises:

Now pluck up the flax for the maidens to spin; [1]

[1] According to Brother Bartholomew, who wrote in the twelfth or thirteenth century, there was much and "divers work and

And the "fimble" or female hemp at the same time:

> Wife pluck fro' thy seed hemp, the fimble hemp clean,
> This looketh more yellow, the other more green,
> Use t'one for thy spinning, leave Michell the t'other,
> For shoe thread, and halter, for rope, and such other.

The "carle" or male hemp was not harvested till Michell (Michaelmas), when we are told:—

> Now pluck up thy hemp, and go beat out the seed,
> And afterward water it as ye see need;
> But not in the river where cattle should drink,
> For poisoning them and the people with stink.

With the last lines, no person who has tied up his boat in a Friesch canal, to leeward of retting hemp, can fail to sympathise.

Often, a Suffolk field bears the name "camping close," from a rough kind of football once played there—a game quite obsolete now in these parts. The more grass is trampled in winter the better. Tusser accordingly advised:

> Get campers a ball
> To camp therewithal.

And,

> In meadow and pasture—to grow the more fine,
> Let campers be camping in any of thine.

How such people as Master Geads and his jolly neighbours feasted at Christmastide is told with great gusto; those old-fashioned yeomen did indeed enjoy high feeding:

> Good bread and good drink, a good fire in the hall,
> Brawn pudding and souse, and good mustard withall,
> Beef, mutton, and pork, shred (mince) pies of the best,
> Pig, veal, goose, and capon, and turkey well drest,
> Cheese, apples, and nuts, joly carols to hear,
> As then in the country is counted good cheer.

---

travail," before the flax reached the maidens' hands. After being taken out of the water and dried in the sun, it was "knocked, beaten, and brayed and carfled, rodded, and gnodded, ribbed and heckled—and at the last spun."

The roasting spit was then turned by a dog, a turn-spit or turnbroche,

> Good diligent turnbroche and trusty withall
> Is sometimes as needfull as some in the hall.

Field sports for farmers, Tusser, rather to one's surprise, did not approve of; fowling-pieces had not been invented, and hawking was a sport considered meet only for "gentlemen and persons of quality." Our sage's reflection is :—

> Though some have a pleasure with hawk upon hand,
> Good husbands get treasure to purchase their land.

And though we read elsewhere that, about that time, "the cheife sport of the yeomanry most delightful for their chace" was hare hunting, Tusser does not allude to it.

Saffron, used for bleaching linen, and for cooking, was commonly grown in Suffolk, particularly in the Woodbridge district. In August :

> When harvest is gone,
> Then saffron comes on ;
> A little of ground
> Brings saffron a pound.

We still, in remote places, call the leading man in the harvest field, the "lord" ; and the ancient custom of "holloaing largesse" is not yet forgotten; I have heard it myself. It was the same in Tusser's time, as Tusser himself witnesses :

> Grant harvest-lord more by a penny or two,
> To call on his fellows the better to do,
> Give gloves to thy reapers a largess to cry,
> And daily to loiterers have a good eye.

The wonderful machines, which are the reapers now, do not need gloves.

Turnips and mangold were then unknown in England,

and when hay ran short in winter, there were hard times for sheep and for cattle :

> If snow do continue, sheep hardly that fare
> Crave mistle and ivy for them for to spare.

Young people now have found more interesting uses for mistletoe. Were not the maids of Suffolk always fair? Old Fuller certainly thought so, when he wrote "The God of Nature hath been bountiful, in giving them beautiful complexions."

For cattle, the old farmers cut down boughs of trees :

> From every tree, the superfluous boughs
> Now prune for thy neat, thereupon to go browse.

Suffolk has always been famous for its butter, which, as Fuller again oddly observed, was half our Saviour's fare in infancy—"butter and honey shall He eat"; and likewise for its cheese, which Camden accounted good as that of Parma; but which, made by more modern methods, of skimmed-milk, has been ofttimes flung into the hog trough, and there, our Suffolk ploughboy poet says, it long remained, defying even the pigs' teeth :

> . . . . . in perfect spite
> Too big to swallow and too hard to bite.

Tusser says that "Good dairy doth pleasure"; can we not fancy our smiling "fair maids" in the dairy, their faces bright with health and happiness; or again, with their sleeves turned up, their dimpled arms in the wash tub, singing his quaint old rhyme :

> Dry Sun Dry Wind
> Safe Bind Safe Find.
>
> Go wash well saith Summer, with Sun I will dry,
> Go wring well saith Winter, with Wind so shall I.

Ewes were milked in those days for the dairy, as they milk them now in Holland, and it seems, produced more for the grass they consumed than cows.

> Five ewes to a cow, make a proof by a score,
> Shall double thy dairy or trust me no more.

Davy gives another extract from the lost Manor Rolls of Theberton, which must have been lost therefore since his time. It bears date in the 42nd year of Queen Elizabeth. I venture to transcribe the clerk's jumbled Latin: *Curia cum leta tenta* 14 *Oct.* 42 *Eliz. capitales plegii super sacramentum dicunt quod Inhabitantes ville Theberton non utunt piliis — Anglice* doe not were capps — *secundum forman statuti in hujusmodi casu provisi. Ideo villata de Theberton penatur ad* 6*d. ad reformandum.*

This, perhaps, purported to be under a statute of 13 Elizabeth, which provided that all persons above the age of seven years (some of worship and quality excepted) should wear upon Sabbaths and holidays caps of wool, knit thicked and dressed in England, upon pain to forfeit ten groats for the omission thereof.[1] The instance is remarkable, of a Manor Court retaining its magisterial jurisdiction down to so late a date.

Returning to our 16th century registers; there is little more worth quoting: but some old Christian names may be available for future Theberton babies. Parents, tired of Gladys, Phyllis, and such like, might do worse than

[1] The clerk was probably not aware that the Act had, in fact, been repealed three years before, in 39 Elizabeth. The industry, designed to be protected thereby and by the previous Acts of Edward IV. and Henry VIII., was of importance, maintaining before the invention of fulling mills, fifteen distinct callings of handicraftsmen. The best caps were made at Monmouth. "Wearing leeks in their Monmouth caps," said Fluellen of the Welshmen, in K. Henry V.

call their girls—Beteriss, Damaris, Annice, Amyce, Ancilla, Faith, Fyonet, Mirable, Sythe, Finet, Apphia, Tryphena or Jeronomye—names all borne by their female predecessors in our parish.

Among the surnames in the register, few are familiar now,—Syle, Smyle, Slith, Sylbarte, Semicraft, Hellouse, Erys, Boutatout, Wagylgoose, are among them. Boutatout reads like a Huguenot name. One comes across it, too, in naval history. John "Buteturt" was by King Edward II. appointed "Admiral captain of sailors and marines" (of the East coast) and also "of our knights and other faithful subjects who are about to proceed with the same John against our Scottish enemies and rebels"—this in 1315. Some of the late surnames are pretty, Marjoram we have still, and there was Flowerdew.

Early in the 17th century, matters of social interest to country folk seem to have been much in the air. In Queen Elizabeth's last Parliament we find such subjects debated in both houses. In 1601, a bill was brought into the Commons House against profane swearing; it never matured into an Act; but it interests us, because, in the course of debate one member took occasion to inveigh against holders of the office of Justice of the Peace, which even then was respectable for antiquity. So far back as 1332, it was, that the "lords and great men" had advised King Edward III. "that he should ordain Justices in every County for the conservation of the peace, with power to repress and punish offenders."

The member, one Mr. Glascocke, related to the House this tale about a Justice whom he knew:—A poor neighbour coming to him, said,

Sir, I am very highly rated in the Subsidy Book.

I know thee not, said the Justice.

Not me Sir, quoth the country man, why your worship

had my team and my oxen such a day, and I have ever been at your worship's service.

Have you so Sir, quoth the Justice, I never remembered I had any such matter, no, not a sheep's tail:

"So," continued Mr. Glascocke, "unless you offer sacrifice of sheep and oxen to the idol Justices they know you not"—and so forth.

In defence of the Justices, Sir Francis Hastings said: "I never in my life heard Justices of the Peace taxed before in this sort. For aught I know, Justices of the Peace be men of quality, honesty, experience, and justice." And again, another speaker:—"I much marvel that men will dare accuse Justices of the Peace, Ministers to Her Majesty, without whom the Commonwealth cannot be."

There were about this time, particularly in parts of London, numbers of corrupt magistrates, for whom no good word can be said. Glascocke, later, pretended by way of apology, that his diatribes had been aimed against that class alone, men then commonly known as Basket Justices.

Parliament had always been anxious that Justices of the Peace should be above suspicion. In 1439, it had been enacted that County Justices must possess land worth £20 a year—equivalent to some £300 now; and the reason assigned was that some persons had been appointed, who, "on account of their meanness and incapacity could not govern or direct the people." There can be no doubt that independent position, a liberal education, and some enabling acquaintance with law, must be more solid grounds for confidence in the dispensers of justice, than the wearing of badges of political parties, whatever their colour.

In the same Parliament, the House of Lords also had

social legislation before them. They passed a bill intituled "Against Drunkards and common haunters of Alehouses and Taverns." Drunkenness was then prevalent, as it always had been, the statements of Camden and of Fuller notwithstanding. Camden's opinion was that the vice had recently been brought to England out of the Netherlands; that before 1581, of all Northern nations, the English had been the most moderate, and were much commended for their sobriety; and that our soldiery had only learned in the recent Dutch wars "to drown themselves in strong liquors, and by drinking others' healths to impair their own." Fuller quotes Camden and asserts that "before the midst of the reign of Elizabeth there was neither general practice nor legal punishment of that vice in this kingdom," and goes on to say :—"We must sadly confess that since that time, many English souls have taken a cup too much of Belgic wine, whereby their heads have not only grown dizzy in matters of less moment, but their whole bodies stagger in the fundamentals of their religion."

A bill was also introduced into the Lords which attained a second reading, for preservation of pheasants and partridges. It was, in due course, referred to a special committee, on which sat very grave and reverend Signiors :—an archbishop, four bishops, three learned judges.

Poaching had for centuries been a subject of legislation. More than two hundred years before, in 1389, a statute had made illegal the use of "rabbit nets, heyes and hare pipes." In 1536, a proclamation was made by Henry VIII. prohibiting the slaughter of partridges, pheasants, and herons, from—how strange it sounds now—the Palace of Westminster to St. Giles' in the Fields, and thence to Islington, Hampstead and Hornsey

Park. I think, however, that this debate in the House of Lords was the first time that not only poaching, but actual preservation was under discussion in Parliament. That pheasants, so "fair in feather and dainty in the flesh," were, not long after this, even hand-reared, I infer from Fuller, who writes, "whether these tame, be as good as the wild pheasants, I leave palate men to decide."

In those days, constituencies paid their Parliament-men, whose "wages," since Edward I., had been levied by the sheriffs on the counties. The "wages" of knights of the shire were 4*s.* a day—equivalent to, say, £3 now—and of the burgesses, borough members, half that at least; with besides, in both cases, charges of going and coming, fees for writs, and so forth. And to make sure of fair work for fair pay, it was ordered that, when absent without the Speaker's leave, the legislators should lose their wages.

Plummer's work, in his later years, seems to have been many sided. We know he preached "everye Sondaye" at Theberton, and that he also served the cure of Middleton; and, besides this ministerial work, an Act of Parliament had thrust other strange duties upon him: he was to be present to aid the constable when rogues were whipped, and register the same, on pain of five shillings for every default; he had also to register the testimonials of servants leaving their places, for which last duty, a munificent two pence was to be allowed him.

The two old bells, impressed with the date 1614, were hung it is likely in Plummer's time.

1625 saw the close of our parson's life. That year, the register records "Reighnald Plummer minister of this Towne was buryed the 30th of Aug."

Plummer had lost his first wife Issabel in 1617, and had married again. During his last illness, he made his will which is not without interest, as suggesting the plenishing of a country parsonage of the period.

After bequests to the poor of Leiston, Westleton, Middleton and Fordley (the parishes of Middleton and Fordley were not united till 1657) of 5*s.* to each parish, he gave "his loving wife Ann £20, a bedstead 2 bolsters 2 pillowes 2 blanketts 1 coverlett, as it standeth in the parlour (beds stood in parlours then of even great houses[1]) with the curtings, and sixe payre of sheetes the best att her choyce, all her apparell lynnyng and wollen, all her ridinge geare with her syde sadle and other furniture (Ann seems to have been an equestrienne) one letherein trunck, one joyned box, another little painted boxe, one dossend (dozen) of table napkins, all the hempe, towe, and (illegible), her gould rings, her bible, her boxe of banketting dishes, my bearinge clothe, fower greate peaces of pewther the best att her choyce, sixe pewther porringers, one bosen (basin), one joyned chayre, her lookinge glasse." Also he gave her £6 13*s.* 4*d.*, on condition she should make no claim to thirds in his free lands, but should release, "according to lawe in that case provided, att the chardges in Lawe of John Ingham of Theberton yeoman, soe as she bee not driven to travell further then the cittie of Norwich." To the said John Ingham and his heirs, he left all his free lands in Theberton (he had bought lands of Robert Barnes in 1610, and had sold lands called Harts to John Ingham for £230 but had not conveyed the freehold portion of them), but—the will continued—if his wife should refuse to release her dower in them, then he gave the said

[1] *Vide* inventory of Sir John Rous, at Henham, 1603, set out in Suckling's *Suffolk*.

£6 13*s.* 4*d.* to said John Ingham, towards the compounding with her for her thirds. To Mary his daughter £20, Dorithie his daughter £14, Ambrose his son £20, William his son £20, Elizabeth his daughter £20, Jaine his daughter £20, at 21. All residue of goods and chattels he gave unto Tymothie and John his two sons towards payment of their portions, and he appointed them his executors. The will was witnessed by Zacharie Starke and Robert Beare.

Neither in church nor in churchyard is found any memorial of this worthy rector; for three hundred years his name has been forgotten. That these words, written during his lifetime, may be applied to him, it will not hurt us to believe:— "The Lord hath vouchsafed many singular benefitts, as proper to this country (Suffolk), among which this one is nott the least, the great number of religious, grave, reverend, and learned ministers of God's Holy Word, which are planted in this shire, travelling (travailing) in the Lord's harvest, with sound doctrine and upright life."

The good man was succeeded by one William Fenn, who was presented by Charles I., one of the earliest acts of his reign. Our register has this entry:—"1626, memoranda that Willẽ ffenn Clerke, uppon the seconde day of Aprill, in the yere of our Lorde 1626, beinge lately inducted into the church of Theberton in Suff., did then and there in the tyme of Divine service openly reade the forty articles[1] intituled Articles agreed Upon by the Archbishops and Byshops in the Coñvocacõn holden at London, Anno Domini 1562, without eyther addinge or detractinge, and with the declaracõn of his unfeined assent and consent unto

[1] An evident mistake. The real number of articles was the same then as now—thirty-nine.

the same and every of them, in the presence of us whose names be here under written :—Thomas London, John Ingame, Thos. Bradstreet, Edmond Whincopp, Robert Backler, Robert Beare, Godfrey Trelonde, Robert Goding, John (illegible), and many others.

CHAPTER IX

FENN'S tenure of his benefice nearly coincided with his royal patron's tenure of the kingdom ; and no time more troublous and distracted has ever been known in England.

It is not for a local chronicler to launch out from his backwater into tempestuous seas ; the nation's history too high for him, he does not dare to touch in these pages, save, when needs must, to explain the story of his parish. Differences had long agitated the minds of Englishmen, and clefts were opening now in many directions ; firstly, in the domain of religion ; and secondly, in the realm of society and politics. In religion it was, that the earthquake was most severely felt in our little community. There were, no doubt, both Puritan and Roman Catholic sympathizers in Theberton. The restoration of Communion Tables to the east end of churches, the calling them altars, indeed all the church ceremonial and discipline inculcated by Laud, had scandalized the Puritans ; while, on the other hand, to the eyes of high church people, the Puritans were hypocritical bigots, dour and sour themselves, and set upon denying enjoyment to all others. Sundays, formerly happy holy days, were to be as Jewish

sabbaths. "The vanityes of the Gentiles, which were comprehended in a Maypole, were to be battered down," and indeed, all recreations, however innocent, were reprobated, and if possible repressed.

James I. saw that the common people clung to the old, more cheerful religion; and turned his astute mind to win their affections for the reformed Church of England. He issued the Declaration we call the Book of Sports, and thereby notified his pleasure to his good people, that after the end of Divine Service they should not be letted from any such lawful recreations as dancing either men or women, archery, leaping, vaulting, nor from having May games, Whitsun ales and Morris dances, and the setting up of Maypoles; and that women should have leave to carry rushes for the "decoring" of churches according to their old custom.[1] And the professor of kingcraft laid a bait for nonconformists by providing that to those only who attended church were the sports to be permitted.

His Majesty's efforts notwithstanding, religious bickerings and civil dissensions raged throughout Fenn's incumbency.

Our churchwardens were presented in 1627, because they had not, as the law required, "Bishopp Jewell's Apologie"; Mr. Bradstreet, a witness to Fenn's reading in, appeared, and promised to supply the

[1] The ancient sport of bull-baiting was expressly excepted from the king's list of lawful Sunday recreations. The brutal amusement had been enjoyed by Queen Elizabeth; during Puritan times it was prohibited altogether, but it revived with the Restoration; Pepys says of the good sport he saw at the Paris garden: "the bulls tossed the dogs into the very boxes." Long afterwards in William III.'s reign, it was still a fashionable amusement, as a French witness M. Misson wrote, indulged in by "butchers and gentlemen." In 1802, a Parliamentary majority refused to put it down: and not till 1835 was a law enacted to make it illegal.

same. The Bradstreet family had for some time been resident in the parish; the name occurring in the register in 1594. It may be, that the Rev William Bradstreet, our rector from 1865 to 1881, descended from this old Theberton stock.

In 1633, the Book of Sports not having been widely promulgated, Charles I. had it republished; and strictly commanded that it should be read in churches by the clergy. Parson Fenn, we shall see, read it in his Theberton church, and no doubt with unction, as also without doubt, to the disgust of Puritans in his congregation.

Some parsons, like Buridan's ass, halted betwixt two opinions; one minister of a church in London, after reading the King's Declaration, immediately went on with the Ten Commandments, adding:—"Dearly Beloved, you have heard the Commandments of God, and of man, now obey which you please."

The bulk of the people of Theberton must, I think, have been Puritans, detesting the high church and royalist proclivities of Fenn, and bitterly opposed to any such changes as should "put on their church the shape and face of Popery."

In 1639–40, writs had come down into Suffolk to collect "ship money"; and the overseers and the constable had to assess the charge upon the ratepayers of Theberton. Throughout Suffolk, feeling against this fateful tax rose very high, "people abounding," so we read, "in remissness and obstinacy." "Innumerable groans and sighs," the sheriff reported, "were daily returns, instead of payment." It is significant of the remissness and obstinacy of our stiff-necked parish, that, though neighbouring "towns," Middleton and Kelsale, were certainly rated, and we must suppose

paid their rates, no return was obtained from Theberton.

The folk of Theberton, as those of other parishes, had in 1641 to become parties to the great Protestation. The form was :—

> "I, A. B. do in the presence of Almighty God, promise, vow, and protest, to maintain and defend as far as lawfully I may, the true reformed Protestant religion expressed in the doctrines of the Church of England, against all Popery and Popish innovations within this realm."

It seems that this was not signed in each separate village. From Dennington for example, the minister and churchwardens and constable went to Laxfield to sign.

Fenn still clung to his rectory, although his position must have been perplexing to say the least of it. One day, parsons were commanded by Parliament to read certain Proclamations to their people. Next came a King's Proclamation, enjoining them on their allegiance, not to read the proclamations issued by Parliament. And then again, from Parliament came injunctions, forbidding them to read what had been sent them by the King.

In 1642, under two Acts of Parliament a sum of £20,609. 17*s.* was charged upon Suffolk, of which Theberton was assessed at £20. 8*s.* 4d. We have, for our parish, the names of all the persons charged, with the amount each had to pay : the list contains sixty-nine names, some of which are mentioned later.

In December of the same year, the Commons passed an Ordinance, to set on foot the famous Eastern Association. Suffolk and the other eastern counties

accepted it warmly. At first, contributions poured in of arms and of money; but before long, free gifts having been exhausted, loans had to be asked for, to be secured by the "Propositions for the defence of Parliament," and bearing interest at the abnormal rate of ten per cent. How Theberton took up the loan we have no evidence. In Dennington, we find that two inhabitants, Bartholomew and Edward Rafe, lent £10 "upon the Propositions." Cratfield contributed money and plate and also two nags and a mare, and these were sent in for collection to Yoxford, as probably were any loans from Theberton.

Happily brother had not to fight with brother here in Suffolk; but such entries as these in the Dennington books, help us to realise how civil war afflicted other districts of England:

"26 Jan. 1643, Given to a poor distressed man and his wife and children, being plundered by the King's forces of all their estate 5/-."

"1644 Laid out to young Lionel Nickolls being maimed in the Parliament's service 17/-."

"Given by consent of the town to two maimed souldiers, the one having his leg shot off, and the other shot in the arm, 4/-."

In 1643 again, an Ordinance was made by Parliament, directing, among other things, that altar rails were to be taken down, and communion tables moved from the east ends into the bodies of churches. Under this Ordinance, crucifixes, images, and pictures of saints, and superstitious inscriptions, were also to be removed and done away with; and from it originated the commission of the iconoclast Dowsing.

In some venerable German churches—Hildesheim may serve for an example—not only the fabrics themselves in their integrity, but likewise the ancient church

furnishings, and precious objects treasured in their sacristies, have been preserved, as witnesses from age to age of a hoary antiquity. In England, on the other hand, Dowsing or barbarous soldiers, ignorant incumbents or modern architects, have worked their wicked wills, and stripped most of our churches bare of things historical, and vulgarized others with machine-made sham Gothic ornaments.

In our own parish church, almost nothing remains to carry our minds back to past ages. True, the old walls yet stand; but there is little else, to suggest the scenes which, within those walls, have during long ages succeeded each other.

Not the least striking of such scenes was enacted in 1643 or 1644. Members having themselves subscribed the Solemn League and Covenant, Parliament directed it to be sent to the Justices of the Peace and other men of influence in all parishes of England, and to be taken in churches by all congregations. The minister was, upon a Sunday, to read the entire Covenant from the pulpit; and during the reading, the congregation were to uncover (men wore their hats then in churches); and, at the end of the reading, all were to stand, and, holding up their bare right hands, to promise that they would sincerely, really, and constantly, through the grace of God, endeavour in their several places and callings the preservation of the reformed religion. Afterwards, all had to subscribe the Covenant, by affixing their names or marks to a roll of parchment, which was to be preserved as a record in the parish.

No parchment roll has been preserved in our parish of Theberton; but probably, most of the residents named in the assessment list of 1642 signed it, for instance: Sir Arthur Jenney, "Mr. Claxton," Thomas

Ingham, Daniel Hygate, Robert Beare, and John London. Parson Fenn too, described as "William Fenne Curate for tithes and Glebe," appears in the assessment list. He was still the parson of Theberton; but whether he obeyed the Parliament by reading and signing the Covenant, or obeyed his own conscience and refused, thereby giving his enemies cause to blaspheme, we have no evidence.

Just at that time, Parliament was passing an Ordinance, whereby, after reciting that complaints had been made by the well-affected inhabitants of Suffolk among other counties, that the service of Parliament was retarded, the enemy strengthened, peoples' souls starved, and their minds diverted from the care of God's cause, by their idle ill-affected and scandalous clergy; it was ordained that the Earl of Manchester should appoint county committees; of whom any five members were to sit in any place selected by the Earl, and were to call before them ministers that were scandalous in their lives, ill-affected to the Parliament, or fomenters of the unnatural war then raging, or that should wilfully refuse to obey the Ordinances of Parliament, with power to send for witnesses and examine them upon oath.

A Suffolk committee was appointed pursuant to this Ordinance comprising: Alexander Bence M.P., and Squire Bence, William Bloyse M.P., Francis Brewster, Robert Brewster of Wrentham M.P. for Dunwich, Sir Edward Duke, William Heveningham, Sir William Playter, Edward Read, William Rivet, and Sir John Rous, each of whom was paid 5*s.* per diem for his services.

The Ordinance was soon to be applied to our parish. On Christmas Day 1644, a warrant was issued directed to the inhabitants of the town of Theberton, or any two

of them, requiring them to summon William Fenn parson of the parish, and three witnesses who were named in the warrant, to appear at Beccles on Wednesday the 17th day of January, "att the signe of the Kings Heade," to make proof of the articles exhibited against the said minister; . . . . and that the said Mr. Fenn should be given notice, that he should come prepared to give in his answer in writing, and to produce any witnesses who might conduce to the clearing of himself, on the dismal charge of the witnesses that should testify against him. This warrant was signed by a sub-committee of five: Sir Robert Brooke, knight, William Hyningeham and Robert Brewster, esquires, and Edward Reade and Francis Brewster, gents, who described themselves as Deputy Lieutenants and Committee of Parliament.

The case was heard by the sub-committee, and, in the result, the Articles were held proved. The evidence for the prosecution was to the effect, among other things: that Fenn was a common frequenter of alehouses as a common drunkard, that he was a common swearer, that he was grossly and shamelessly immoral, that he had given out in speeches that he had a licence from the devil to send souls to hell, and power to save whom he would, and that he had threatened to murder one of the witnesses. And furthermore, it was in evidence: that he was a great enemy against the proceedings of Parliament, and had frequently drunk healths to Prince Rupert, and rejoiced that the great parliament-man Sir William Waller had been routed, that he did not observe Sabbaths and Fast days as commanded by Parliament, that he had frequently bowed towards the font and communion table, and had read the books of liberty for Recreation on the Sabbath day—meaning the Book of Sports.

Among the witnesses to prove the articles were the three who had been summoned, *viz.*, Daniell Hygate gent, Gabriell Battman and Richard Worledge, and also thirty-three others, all of Theberton, thirteen of whose names appear in the assessment list of 1642; among them, Robert Beare and his wife, John London, and William Dowseing.

In February 1644, the report of the sub-committee having been sent up to the Commons' Committee of Plundered Ministers; that Committee ordered that the Rectory of Theberton be forthwith sequestered from William Fenn for great misdemeanours, and that some godly and orthodox divine be recommended to the Assembly of Divines, to examine his fitness to have the said sequestration; and that John London, Thomas Ingham, Robert Beare, and one John Fasset whose name I do not find elsewhere, were to take care and provide for the service of the said cure, till this Committee should take further order in the premises, and the said William Fenn was thereby commanded to forbear to cut, fell, or carry away, any of the timber or other trees, or wood, standing, or growing upon the glebe of the Rectory.[1]

What judgment should be passed by us on parson Fenn. It is notorious that the judicial honesty of the Plundered Ministers' Committee, and likewise of county committees, is open to the gravest suspicion. The bias of the class which supplied their members, is betrayed by the use of such epithets as "scandalous," "malignant," "delinquent," to designate men, whose greatest offence, perhaps, was disagreement with the views political and religious of the faction in

[1] This information was taken by Mr. Davy from papers which were in the possession of my grandfather in 1810.

power. "White's Century" written by a member of Parliament was a much esteemed work; "Scandalous Malignant Priests" were among the first words of its lengthy title. The County Committees in general were thus described by an eye and ear witness cited in Walker's "Sufferings of the Clergy":—"Mine ears still tingle at the loud clamours and shoutings there made . . . . in derision of grave and reverend divines, by that rabble of sectaries, which daily flocked thither to see their new pastime; where the committee members, out of their vast privilege to abuse any men though their betters, without control, have been pleased to call the ministers of Christ brought before them by jailors and pursuivants and placed like heinous malefactors without the bar, saucy jacks, base fellows, brazen-faced fellows" —and so forth. Walker says that so notorious were the dealings of these committees, that it long remained a common saying in Suffolk, that Mr. Playters of Uggeshall was deprived for "eating custard after a scandalous manner," he being known to keep a good table.

Moreover, in favour of Fenn, one cannot but observe how many of the charges against him bore a political colour; such as being an enemy to proceedings of Parliament; rejoicing at Waller's defeat; not observing Sabbaths and fasts as commanded by Parliament; reading the Book of Sports—it had been his plain duty to read it, in obedience to a lawful government—and the like.

We have not before us the evidence—if any was adduced—for Fenn's defence. Whether he put in a written answer, or tendered witnesses, we do not know. It is possible that answer and evidence have been suppressed. And there is this further observation:—

out of five hundred beneficed clergy in Suffolk, it is stated, and I do not doubt the statement, that one hundred and twenty-nine were at this same time sequestered. Is it at all likely that of ministers of religion so large a proportion, more than one-fourth, could have been guilty of such moral or ecclesiastical offences, as merited this severe punishment?

Against Fenn on the other hand, it is to be noted that his judges were not ignorant men, of a low class such as, according to Walker, composed the committees in general, but on the contrary, that they bore names highly respected in Suffolk; and there is the testimony concerning his moral conduct, of no less than thirty-six witnesses out of his own parish, to the effect that Fenn was not fit to live with decent people, and was a disgrace to his sacred profession. Whether their evidence was tested by cross-examination we do not know—probably not.

One of Fenn's last ministerial acts, was to baptize "Elizabeth Jenney daughter of Sir Robert Jenney and Elizabeth his lady, on 25 January 1644."

After his deprivation, Fenn does not seem to have left Theberton; for there is an entry in the parish register: 1651, "Willyam Fenne, Minister of Theberton, deceased this liffe Apelle the 28." Some friend of Fenn's, the parish clerk perhaps, not willing to admit his successor's title, may have thus described him. In point of fact, John Cary was the minister of Theberton in actual possession of the benefice.

Even our "rusticals" must have heard of that star of the first magnitude, George Villiers then Marquess of Buckingham. He was now to become of special interest to our parish and neighbourhood. That grotesque sovereign, his dear "Dad and Gossip," had been loading the "dogge Steenie" with extravagant gifts. One of

them was the lordship of Leyston manor, then valued at £114. 7*s.* 11¼*d.* a year.[1]

In 1620, the Marquess held his first court for Leyston at which, on the homage, sat Robert Beare and Thomas London both of Theberton.

Also, a perambulation was made of the manor, which marches on one side with the manor of Theberton. By words alone without a map, the boundary can hardly be followed, and no ancient map is in existence. My readers, however, may recognise a few place names, such as "the West House," and "the Harrow"—whence I suppose comes Harrow Lane; and possibly Higbones, Herne's Grove, and Hangman's Close, might be identified.

Buckingham sold the manor to Richard Miller a mercer in Cheapside; and, in 1633, we find an action in the court of Exchequer commenced between Miller and others co-plaintiffs, and John Claxton, Esqr., whose name we know, as defendant.

The court sent down commissioners; and they—Henry Coke, and Edmund Harvey Esquires and John Cary and Francis Burwell, gents, sat at Eastbridge, may be at the redoubtable Eel's Foot, to take the evidence. Claxton was a copyhold tenant of Leyston manor, and traced his title on the rolls, from a surrender made in Edward IV.'s reign, by John Sturmyn. This John Sturmyn was probably the man, or a like-named son of the man, who in 1445, as will be remembered, withstood the irruption of the Abbot Clement.

The question now litigated was the right, whose it was, to fell timber upon the copyholds. Among the witnesses were John Ingam (Ingham) who ten years before had witnessed the reading in of parson Fenn, Henry

[1] In the Lords Journals, Proceeding on the impeachment of Buckingham in 1626, Leyston is spelt Lagston.

Rackham, and John Baker of Theberton, Sir Hurstone Smith a knight of Huntingfield, and William Buckenham who had once been bailiff of the manor of Theberton. The land, on which grew the trees in controversy, was thirty-five acres, described as situate in Moorfield. Claxton owned other copyholds also, among them eight acres in Theberton, and also freehold land adjacent to lands of Arthur Jenney. The timber was valued at £150 or thereabouts.

In the same year 1633 we meet with Miller's name again, this time more closely associated with that of John Ingham of Theberton. A small craft, called a "pink," had been wrecked off the mouth of the Minsmere river near what we call the Sluice; and, while on a sand bank, where only boats could get to her, had been seized for the King. It seems, she afterwards drove up on the foreshore, and cargo was there taken out of her, and laid upon the beach. Miller then claimed the property, in his capacity of the lord of Leyston manor, and owner of the soil on which the wreck and the goods lay. Ingham was the bailiff of the manor, and was zealous to enforce Miller's rights. No doubt swarms of would-be wreckers had been attracted to the beach, Leyston copyhold tenants among them, and it was said that at Ingham's instigation, the tenants would not suffer the Admiralty Marshal to see the goods. Thereupon, complaint against Ingham was made to Mr. Secretary Coke, and a warrant was issued from the Admiralty, to bring him up from Theberton, to answer in London such matters as should be objected against him on behalf of his Majesty.

Our present pulpit was erected in Fenn's time—1628. The sermons preached by him are, perhaps happily, unremembered; and thousands more emitted from the

same platform of eloquence—some good seed, fruit of reverent study, to grow in the hearts of devout congregations; some pithless thistledown, listlessly blown about, while sleep crept round from pew to pew—are all alike utterly forgotten.

Fenn kept what he was pleased to call a "herbidge book"—tithe book, in which, in 1634, he entered "the customes belonging to the Towne of Theberton." They are not too long to transcribe:

Meadowe the acre	4*d.*
Cow with calf. Lactage	3*d.*
Cow calfe paid Lactage	2*d.*
A gast beast	1*d.*
A colts fall	1*d.*
So many odd lambs—so many	1*d.*
So many odd geese—so many or to be accompted next yeare.	1*d.*
So many odd piggs—so many or to be reckoned the next fall.	1*d.*

We have also: "Anno 1635, a terrier contayning the Edifices and Lands belonging to the Church and Rectory of Theberton, made by the Rector and Churchwardens there."

There was then:—"Imprimis, a Mansion House contayneing a Hall, Parlor, and Kitching, with a Backehouse, a Barne, stable, and Gate house"; which was, I take it, the rectory house, much as it was before the modern addition in Mr. Bradstreet's time. Then, there was:—"One oartch yarde (orchard), two gardens with other yards enclosed, and one Hempland conteyneing by estimation half an acre." This is represented by the lawn and garden between the house and the high road. "Item one peece of land an acre and a halfe lyeing between the lands of Mr. Jermyn (Query Jenney) towards the north, and ye way leading from Theberton church into Moor Lane towards ye S."

This is evidently the field between the shrubbery called the church walk appertaining to the Hall, and the Hall road, then called Moor Lane.

A description of the rest of the glebe follows, but there is no further matter of interest. It seems to have been assumed that there were 10a. 2r. 6p. in all, besides the site of the "mansion" orchard, yards, and gardens. The terrier is signed by Willm. Fenn, rector, and Thomas Whitcock, and Wm. Dowseing, the churchwardens.

Once more, we find John Ingham's name; and upon the same document, that of a member of the Jenney family. They both were witnesses of the will, made in 1636, of Jeromomye Ingham who died in 1639. This Christian name seems to have been a favourite one in the Ingham family; a daughter and a grand-daughter bore the name after her.

John Ingham died in 1639, at the age of fifty-seven. By his will, he devised to his son Thomas, "the messuage in which he dwelt, being on the north west part of the common way leading from the parsonage of Theberton towards a place or hill called Stone Hill, and all his barns and stables on the south east part." This dwelling was the present Hall Farm house, of which the plastered walls and long thatched roof now look, I think, much as they looked then. The farm buildings are more modern; Ingham's barn and stables stood on the opposite side of the lane, in the meadow now known as the paddock.

Fenn's living had been sequestered, as we have seen, in February 1644. Messrs. London, Ingham, Beare, and Fasset, had to find casual preachers; till, in the month of May, 1645, John Cary or Carey, B.A., was referred to the "committee of Divines

for the ordination of ministers," and was by them duly ordained, as a godly and orthodox divine, to the living of Theberton. Fenn had been twice married; his first wife's name was Dorithie, and the second Elizabeth. Elizabeth had died before the ejection of her husband, so Cary came into possession of the benefice, free from the deduction of one-fifth of the profits, which the wives of sequestered ministers could claim. He was the incumbent, in whose time, notice was entered upon the register of the death of ex-parson Fenn, by the strange description "minister of Theberton."

John Cary held the benefice all through, and beyond, the Commonwealth period. It is recorded in our registers that on "13 Feb. 1666, John Carey the rector of *ffebruarie* (sic) was buried."

CHAPTER X

I WONDER whether Cary allowed bells to ring or the passing or soul bell to be tolled, during his time. In some places we know they were silenced. At Newcastle, for example, it was ordered by the Vestry in 1655, that the church bells be used again, "we having had," the vestry minuted, "the judgment of our minister concerning any superstition that might be in it"—by "it" meaning the passing bell.

It is strange as true, that the high tide of Puritan ascendency brought with it an access of gross superstition. Trials and killings for witchcraft had grown frequent and more frequent, during James I.'s reign: till at length, a frenzy of injustice and cruelty swept through the land. It was not doubted by ministers, or even judges, that witches committed crimes by help of Satan. Could then beings so depraved be suffered to live among mankind? It followed that hundreds, aye thousands, of forlorn creatures were done to death under sanction of religion and law.

Persons put to death for witchcraft in the one year 1645, were more numerous than the Protestants martyred in any year of the bloody reign of Mary.

As I have said elsewhere all that I had to say on this

subject,[1] I now only transcribe, with the compiler's permission,[2] an account culled from the books of our neighbour town of Aldborough :—

		£	s.	d.
1645.	To Goody Phillips for her pains in searching out witches	1	0	0
„	To Widow Phillips the search woman for giving evidence	1	5	0
„	To John Paine for hanging seven witches . . .		11	0
„	To William Dannell for the gallows and setting them up	1	0	0
„	For a post to set by the grave of the dead bodies that were hanged and for burying of them .		6	0
„	Received of Mr. Newgate in part for trying a witch	4	0	0
„	Received of Mr. Richard Browne by the hands of Mr. Bailiff Johnson in part for trying a witch	4	0	0
„	To Mr. Hopkyns in the town for finding out witches	2	0	0

This Hopkyns or Hopkins, a sordid wretch, was the self-appointed "witch finder general," who it is said, I hope with truth, was at last swum himself, having, as related in Hudribras :—

> Proved himself at length a witch
> And made a rod for his own breech.

It was in the same year 1645, that the magistrates of the adjoining county of Essex, sentenced eighteen women "poore mellencholie, envious, mischevous, ill disposed, ill dieted, atrabilus constitutions," to be hanged for witchcraft.

Superstition is not wholly extinct even now in our neighbourhood.

A medical man of eminence in Suffolk has told me

[1] "Witchcraft and Christianity." *Blackwood's Magazine*, March, 1898.

[2] I have here again, and for much besides, to thank Mr. Redstone.

that patients often ask him to "take it off them." A farmer's wife, about ten years ago, said she knew who the woman was, who had put it on herself and her son. They had heard, when in bed, a "whiff, whiff, whiff," above them, and then it was being put on. My friend always told his patients that though he could not take witches' spells off, he could no doubt put them through them—with a dose of medicine. Such superstitions, he believes, are much more common than we know, ignorant people being ashamed to disclose them.

I have myself come across, in our own parish, a more than commonly interesting superstition. The wife of a labouring man had a child ill. She consulted a wise woman, who advised her to put milk into a saucer, and "stand it out abroad" at night. Should a weasel drink of the milk, she was to give what it left as medicine to the child.

The interest is that weasel superstitions derive from remote antiquity; and are found to this day with few variations in countries far removed from each other, indeed wherever almost in the world there are weasels. The matter, I hope, justifies a moment's digression.

To go back to antiquity:—The Romans thought it was unlucky to meet a weasel, and had a common expression *Mustelam habes*—you have a weasel in your house, applicable to an unfortunate, whom luck seemed always to pass by.

In the time of Constantius, it is clear that there were poor folk to whom the cry of a weasel presaged evil; we know that such persons were hunted down, and condemned for holding heathen superstitions.

In a Penitential of Theodore: "If food had been contaminated by a mouse or a weasel having been

drowned in it; should there be a small quantity, it must be thrown away; but if there be much, it would be enough to sprinkle it with Holy Water."

And by a Confessional of Egbert whoever should give to another liquor in which a mouse or a weasel had been drowned was, if a secular, to fast three days, if a monk, to chant three hundred psalms.

In mediæval days, "the weasel which constantly changes its place," was taken for "a type of the man, estranged from the word of God, who findeth no rest." And it was also associated with that mythical serpent, hatched from a cock's egg—the cockatrice. Brother Bartholomew described the cockatrice, as "of so great venom and perilous, that he slayeth and wasteth him that nigheth him without tarrying; and yet the weasel overcometh him, for the biting of the weasel is death to the cockatrice."

And now, for the present day, in lands widely parted "by shadows of mountains, and roaring of the sea."

Lady Wilde says of the west of Ireland, that weasels are held to be spiteful and malignant, and that old witches sometimes take this form. It is extremely unlucky to meet a weasel the first thing in the morning: still it would be hazardous to kill it, for it might be a witch and take revenge.

In the north-east of Ireland, whitteritts, as weasels are called, are considered eerie.

In modern Greece, the legend is that the weasel, once on a time was a bride, and is now envious of brides, showing her envy by making havoc among wedding gifts and provisions. Therefore, sweetmeats and honey, called "the necesssary spoonfuls," are put out to appease her, and a song is sung, inviting the weasel to partake and to spare the wedding array.

In North America, an aboriginal legend relates how two sister demons commonly take the forms of two weasels.

In the central parts of Asia—the forbidden land of Thibet—we read of a temple where, amongst the images behind the grating, the yellow king of the genii of riches carries a weasel in his hand.

Yet farther east, the Manchus regard a stoat or weasel as a mischievous elf, but yet of great power of healing; and with the Jupitatze tribe who are fond of the chase, three spirits—of the stag, the fox, and the weasel, stand highest in public estimation.

And lastly, in the farthest East, the Japanese have a demon called the Sickle Weasel. When a man's clogs slip from under his feet, and he falls and cuts his face upon the gravel, the wound is referred to the malignant invisible weasel, and his sharp sickle.

I fear digression has been tedious; let us settle on our line again:

In 1645, appeared under the title of "Directory for the Public Worship of God" directions for the conduct of Divine Service, together with an Ordinance of Parliament for the taking away the Book of Common Prayer. And later in the year, a second Ordinance making the use of the Prayer Book by clergy or by laity penal. First and second offences were punishable by fine; for the third, one whole year's imprisonment without bail or mainprize; all prayer books had to be delivered up; and a fine was imposed on persons writing or preaching against the Directory, of which a copy was supplied to every parish constable.

In 1646, there was ordered to be set up in all parish churches, "A Declaration of the Commons of England

assembled in Parliament, of their true intentions concerning the antient and Fundamental Government of the Kingdom; the Government of the church; the Present Peace; Securing the People against all Arbitrary Government."

No doubt it was set up in our own church by the then churchwardens, but so long and verbose was it, that perhaps few, even of those able to read, ever got to the end of it.

In 1649, after that direful tragedy the execution of the King, parson Carey received notice of an order of Parliament, which he could no doubt conscientiously obey: He was not to preach or to pray against the Parliament. In preaching or praying, he was not to make mention of Charles Stuart or of James Stuart the sons of the late King, otherwise than as enemies of the Commonwealth. He was to observe the days of public humiliation or thanksgiving appointed by Parliament, and publish the Acts, Orders, and Declarations thereof. All this, on pain of being adjudged a delinquent within the orders and acts touching sequestration of benefices and stipends.

A statute of the same year enacted that all men over eighteen years were to take and subscribe "The Engagement":—"I do declare and promise that I will be true and faithful to the Commonwealth of England as it is now established without a King or a House of Lords." The Act was repealed in 1653.

In 1650, the King's arms, which had adorned our church, were taken down, and the State's arms substituted.

Parliament set its austere face against profane swearing; and made the habit expensive, by enacting in

1650, that every person styling himself Duke, Marquis, Earl, Viscount, or Baron, should for the first offence forfeit 30*s.*; a Baronet or Knight 20*s.*; an Esquire 10*s.*; a Gentleman 6*s.* 8*d.*; and all inferior persons 3*s.* 4*d.* A double fine was payable for every succeeding offence up to the ninth; and for the tenth, offenders were to be bound to good behaviour. One is forced to infer that ladies were suspected of swearing; for the Act provided, that wives and widows were to pay according to the quality of their husbands, single women of their fathers. Penalties were to be recovered by distress; and, in default thereof the party if above twelve years of age, to be set in the stocks, or if under that age to be publicly whipped. And the Act was to be published, on the first market day in every market town after receipt thereof. Broad, no doubt, were the grins of our jolly farmers as they read this precious statute at Saxmundham market.

A name, now connected by property with Theberton, occurs about this period. One Edmund Peckover, from 1646 to 1655 served as a "solger" in a troop of Colonel Fleetwood's regiment; and after his nine years' service, "during which he behaved himselve fathfulley and honesly as becoms a solger," went into retail trade. His descendants, now represented by Lord Peckover, have long owned the Grange farm in our parish.

The rolls we have of the manor of Theberton begin in 1641, with the first Court Baron of Sir Arthur Jenney. Among the homage are familiar names: Robert Beare, John Backler, Thomas Ingham, George London and Gabriel Reve. One, Thomas Cory, is described as Esquire—Armiger; and three, John Bishopp, George Fermor and Thomas Screvenor, as Gentlemen.

The customs of the manor are stated:—The youngest son is heir; the eldest brother is heir—inheritance thus following in the case of sons, but not of brothers, the custom of Borough English, of which the very name bespeaks Saxon antiquity. Widows, are entitled by the custom, to one-third for dower.

Out of the manor books little of present interest is to be gleaned. A few place-names which I cannot identify, others may recognise, such as "Cottingham Field"; "Cottingham Green"—these somewhere near Stonehill; "Overwakers"; "Harveys att Fen"; "Leff Fen"; "Church Meer"—meer in the sense of boundary; "a certain stagnum called Hartes Pond."

I find in 1651 the first mention of a windmill in our parish. In that year, Richard Usher made his will, entered upon the rolls, whereby he disposed of his lands in Theberton, and his "windmill, and the stones, going gare (gear), furniture, and appurtenances whatsoever thereto belonging."

In August 1653, was passed an Act of Parliament concerning marriages. A "Register," whose office was created by the Act, had to publish at the close of the morning exercise in church, or, should the parties so desire, in the next market place, on three successive market days, the names and places of abode of both parties, and of their parents or guardians or overseers. The parties next had to present themselves to a "Justice of Peace," and the ceremony was to proceed thus: The man, taking the woman by the hand, should distinctly pronounce these words:

> "I, A. B. do here in the presence of God the searcher of all hearts, take thee (C. D.) for my wedded wife; and do also in the presence of God,

and before these witnesses, promise to be unto thee a loving and faithful husband."

And then, the woman taking the man by the hand, should also distinctly pronounce these words:

"I, C. D. do here in the presence of God the searcher of all hearts, take thee (A. B.) for my wedded husband; and do also in the presence of God and before these witnesses, promise to be unto thee a loving faithful and obedient wife."

And thereupon, the Justice was to declare them to be husband and wife. The Act moreover provided that no other form of marriage should be valid.

Pursuant to this Act, in October 1653, "Thomas Ingham was chosen Register for ye towne of Theberton, and sworn in before Justices R. Brewster and Sam. ffawether."

Little more than a year after, it became the duty of Thomas Ingham to publish a marriage between Henry Burford of Theberton "singill man," and Mirable Ingham of the same place "singillwoman." It was published "ye 26 daye of November, and on the third and tenth dayes of December 1654, by and with the consent off Margery the wiffe of Wm. Hadenham (who had been the widow of John Ingham) mother of her ye sad Mirabell and overseere for her the said Mirabell. And the said Henery and Mirabell weare married by and with the consent of the aforesaid Margery, on the one and twentieth day of December aforesaid, by Samewell ffaierwether Esquire."

In another case, the publication of an intended marriage was "att Halesworth markett."

In 1657, the mode of publication remaining the same,

marriages were no longer solemnised by Justices of Peace; but, for instance in Theberton, by John Cary "rector of the parish."

I know nothing of Mr. Fairwether, whose signature does not suggest clerkly accomplishments; but his brother Justice, Robert Brewster, came of a well-known Suffolk family the Brewsters of Wrentham. Robert, and likewise a brother of his, Francis, were, we have seen, of the committee which sequestered parson Fenn. In 1654, Robert was elected a member of the Convention for Dunwich. He was member for the county (and Francis member for Dunwich) in Cromwell's second Parliament of 1656, when he voted for making the Lord Protector a King; and in the Parliament of 1658 he represented Dunwich. We shall often meet with the name again.

Our Theberton parish accounts speak from 1661—two hundred years later than those of some neighbouring parishes, of Walberswick for example, which begin in 1451. The first rate recorded for Theberton was made in September 1662—a churchwardens' rate for £41. 14*s*. Certain purchases by the churchwardens indicate that, since the Restoration, the Puritan end of the religious see-saw had come lowest. We find: "For the service book 10/-," and "To Master Maswell for the Booke called Jewell's appolligie 1/-"—a High Church publication disapproved of by the Puritans. Again, "a booke for the keeping the King's birthday."

We had a parish soldier in those days; Gabriel London underwent "severall daies Traynings," for which the parish paid him 7*s*. 8*d*., with allowance for "pouder" 4*s*., and "tinning of the head peece" 2*s*.

The repair of the Church must of late have been

neglected, for needful work that year cost £33. 1*s.* 2*d.*; and "ye said London" was paid £1. 17*s.* "for serving the thatcher, plumer, and carpenter," besides something more for "pulling the yvye of the steeple." The account is signed by "John Cary clerk" and others.

In 1664, the overseers credit themselves with 10*s.* "of Daniel Newson for suffering men's servants to tipple in his house contrary to the statute." They had to lay out on account of a poor boy: "For a new Suite, Dublett, Brittches, westcote, cap, linings, (linen underclothes), Pocketts, claspes, eyes, and Buttons, and the making and mendinge of all his clothes £1. 2. 11." And the town house (poor house) had to be thatched. This house has disappeared; but old men can remember it, upon the east side of the road between Gipsy Lodge and Leiston, opposite Buckles Wood. John Cary clerk and John Ingham signed this account and it was allowed by two Justices Thomas Scrivener and John Bedingfeild. The name of Scrivener survives in the person of Commander Levett-Scrivener of Sibton Abbey; Mr. John Bedingfeild, of a younger branch of an ancient family, then lived in an old mansion in Halesworth, of which the curious interior decorations are described in Suckling's "Suffolk."

In 1664, we learn from the Archidiaconal Act Book that the sound windows of the steeple were decayed, for which the churchwardens were presented. Also two persons were presented for absence from church, and one for not having received the communion at the previous Easter.

And not only the steeple but the bells hung in it, now needed reparation; £12. 15*s.* had to be expended for

"riming of the bell," and mending the "boule" of the bell. The bell was sent to Darbie of Ipswich (a famous name of bell founders); and the "worke and tymber for the fframe of the bells" was supplied by John Fenn son of the deprived parson Fenn, who was a wheelwright in Theberton. John Fenn signed the account together with John Cary and Thomas Ingham.

This was the direful year of the Plague of London. It attacked Ipswich and Yarmouth; there is no record of its having come to Theberton, but in a neighbouring parish "A Book and Proclamation to keep a fast to stay the Plague," was purchased and paid for.

How Cary contrived to keep his living after the Act of Uniformity we cannot say. Under that Act, passed in 1662, the thirteenth year of Charles II.—his reign was officially reckoned, not as from his restoration but from his father's death—it became law that the then lately revised Book of Common Prayer should be substituted for the Directory in all parish churches; that no person should thenceforth be capable of holding any ecclesiastical promotion or of administering the Sacrament until he should be ordained priest by episcopal ordination; and, with respect to ministers who then held any benefice, that they, within a prescribed period, should openly read morning and evening service according to the Prayer Book, and declare before the congregation their unfeigned assent and consent to the use of all things therein contained, on pain of being *ipso-facto* deprived of their spiritual promotions. The Act was to come into force on the 24th of August, the day of St. Bartholomew.

Cary may already have been an ordained priest—we find him described "clerk," and he was as we know a University graduate. I suppose that he must have used the Prayer Book; but the presumption is, as no record

of it is entered in the register, that he never made the Declaration the Act required. No less than two thousand beneficed ministers were driven to resign, or else were ejected, for conscience' sake.[1] Cary, however, did not march in that army of "Bartholomew Confessors." The then Bishop of Norwich was the good and wise Dr. Reynolds, who had himself professed Presbyterian views ; and it may be, that holding Cary to be a worthy pastor, he shrank from taking extreme measures against him.

Up to this time, the Puritans had been able to continue within the fold of the Church of England ; this maleficent Act drove them (now to be styled Nonconformists), out of the Church ; and there, unhappily, remain their successors.

In 1665, a rate of £2. 2*s.* 10*d.* was collected in Theberton towards the payment of inferior officers, and for furnishing and other necessaries, for the use of the Militia. Thomas and Gabriel Ingham's share was 9*d.* 1*ob.* 1*qr.*

In 1668, one Underwood, in office as an overseer that year, had to pay £1 to the churchwardens, "for drawinge of beere without licence" ; and the fine was distributed among the poor. The overseers' account was allowed by Sir Robert Kemp. Sir Robert was then living at Ubbeston Hall, the home of his second wife Mary, *née* Sone, whose daughter Mary married Sir Charles Blois of Cockfield Hall.

For "carryinge (the orders for) three hewinge cryes" the churchwardens paid 18*d.* This *hutesium et clamor*, to use the old law term, was the ancient

[1] Theberton was perhaps fortunate in retaining its minister. In the Middleton registers, I find that in 1665, one Harry Dummett had to be buried without a minister, by his wife and son.

process of pursuing felons with horn and voice. Any person joining a hue and cry, could apprehend the fugitive without warrant, and even break open a door, should he have run into a house.

From John Cary's death till his successor was inducted, the living was under sequestration, as is shown by 4*s.* having been collected "of the Rector or Sequestrator, for six months' collection ended at Our Lady, 1668."

CHAPTER XI

In 1668, one John Hacket clerk, petitioned the King, that he might be presented to the Rectory of Theberton. He had, he said, served during the late wars, as chaplain in the *Yarmouth*, and in other ships. He stated that the true value of the benefice was not above £70 a year.

His petition was successful, for in December 1668, we find that he was instituted to the Rectory, "on the death of John Cary clerk last incumbent."

In January following, he complied with the Act of Uniformity; there is this entry in our register:—

"Memorando that John Hacket clerke, Rector of the church and Parish of Theberton, being inducted into the same church and Rectorie, the fiveteenth day of Januarie anno Dom. 1668 (it was 1668 till Easter 1669) on Sunday declared his unfeigned assent and consent &c., and produced a certificate, under the hand and seal of the Lord Bishopp of Norwitch, by which it appeared that, before his institution into the said Rectorie, he had subscribed to the declaration . . . . that it is not lawfull upon any pretence whatsoever to take armes against the King."

On Sunday the 14th of February, Hacket read the

thirty-nine Articles agreed upon by Convocation in 1562, and declared his assent and consent to the same; and on the next Sunday, in the church at the time of prayers, he declared his assent and consent to the use of all things in the Book of Common Prayer.

In 1668, was proved the will of Sir Arthur Jenney, by which he disposed of the manor of Theberton, with the mansion house called "the Parke House."

I find in 1669 the first mention of "Tylers Green," a property then evidently belonging to the parish; the churchwardens received 10*s.* rent for it.

This year, a "Regester of Breiffs" is first noticed. One brief, on which money was collected in Theberton, was "toward the ransome of captives in Algier and Sally," the nests of wasps known as Sallee Rovers, whose existence then disgraced Christian Europe.

In 1670, fen reeves were appointed. About these parish officers we shall have more to say later.

And that year, for a girl, two yards and three quarters of red cotton had to be bought, "for to apparrell her," and "a payre of uppbodyes" whatever they might have been, were added.

In 1672, it may be that Hacket, rector of Theberton, was for a time serving again as a naval chaplain; for against his name at the Easter Visitation that year, we find in the Archdeacon's book, the note, "*apud mare*" —at sea; and it is not improbable that he took part in the great fight of May 28th. Hume gives a good account of the battle, which from the shore may have been seen by many folk of Theberton. Two great fleets lay at anchor in Sole (Southwold) Bay, the French under the Mareschal d'Etrées, the English under H.R.H. the Duke of York and the Earl of Sandwich.

They were lying in a negligent formation, and a great Dutch fleet commanded by the gallant de Ruyter, and with Cornelius de Wit on board, had come out to seek them. Sandwich warned the Duke of the danger of his position, but received a reply which he deemed a reflection upon his courage. Leading the van, he sailed out of the bay to meet the enemy. The Hollands Admiral, Baron van Gendt, was killed,[1] his flagship beaten off, another ship which had ventured to lay Sandwich aboard was sunk, and also three Dutch fire-ships. Though his own ship was torn in pieces with shot, and out of a thousand men near six hundred were laid dead on the deck, Sandwich continued still to thunder with his artillery in the midst of the enemy. Another fire-ship laid hold on him, and the end was imminent; but, though warned by his flag captain Sir Edward Haddock, he refused to escape, and bravely embraced death as a shelter from that ignominy which the rash expression of the Duke had, he thought, thrown upon him. De Ruyter attacked the Duke of York, and engaged him with such fury for about two hours, that, of two and thirty actions in which he had been engaged, he declared this combat to be the most obstinately disputed. The Duke's ship was so shattered that he was obliged to shift his flag to another. In the event, the action having continued till night, the Dutch retired. The French our nominal allies, had sailed away, having taken small part in this great sea battle.

The thunder of great guns must have set all windows

[1] His monument I have seen in the cathedral of Utrecht. An effigy in complete armour lies on a sarcophagus; in front below, a sea fight is carved in full relief; and a long Latin inscription commemorates this: "Vir strenuus prudens invictus Hostium mari terraque tremor et terror celeberrima in Thamesin expeditione per totam Europam."

shaking at Theberton, and made many timid hearts quail.

There lies now before me a time-stained document written with faded ink, in a cramped and difficult hand —probably of John Fenn. It is endorsed "A rate to make rates by, at the highest proportion or valuation" . . . rate made at *ob*: *qr.* in the £. and 2*d.* in the score; and it is headed "Theberton, a rate made the 13th. day of April 1672 by John Fenn Churchwarden" etc. I subjoin a few lines to show the form of it:—

Evidently rental value.

£	s.	d.		s.	d.	ob.	qr.
6	0	0	Mr. Hall's or Hull's manor	0	0	0	0
60	0	0	John Hackett for Rectory	0	0	0	0
60	0	0	Richard Hall Esqre. for Park House farm	3	9	0	0
24	0	0	Benn Jenney Gent for Gardiner's farm	1	6	0	0
6	0	0	John Fenn for his farm	0	4	ob.	0
70	0	0	Thos Bellward	4	4	ob.	0
26	0	0	Thos Ingham's two farms	1	7	ob.	0
7	0	0	John Bedingfeild	0	5	0	qr.
3	0	0	Zachary Fella	0	2	0	qr.
			Out-dwellers.				
8	0	0	Sir Daniel Harvey Knt. for Bushy grove	0	6	0	0

Underneath is written:—

Value of the town at this valuation is £1022, besides the Parsonage and Mr. Hall's manor, which are to be added.

The rate aforesaid is ¾*d.* in the £ which comes unto altogether £2. 13*s.* 6*d. ob. qr.*

	£	s.	d.
at 1*d.* in the £ it comes unto	3	11	4.
at ½*d.* in the £ „ „ „	1	15	8.
at ¼*d.* in the £ „ „ „		17	10.

It will be noticed that a Mr. Hall, not a Jenney, was then rated for the manor. Sir Arthur Jenney had died in 1667, leaving widowed his fourth wife,

whose maiden name had been Hall. It will be noticed too, that at that time Mr. Hall occupied "the Park House Farm."

Sir Daniel Harvey then lord of Leiston manor, was the person referred to by John Evelyn, who in June 1666 wrote in his Diary: "Came Sir Dan Harvey from the generall, and related the dreadfull encounter, on which His Majesty commanded me to dispatch an extraordinary physitian and more chirugeons." This was the great four days' battle with the Dutch fleet, when the event was "rather deliverance than triumph," in the Straits of Dover.

The four columns of figures in the rate account wear an odd appearance, *shillings*, *pence*, *oboli*, and *quadrantes*. As late as 1707, I find the accounts of rates drawn in this fashion, *oboli* and *quadrantes* associated with Arabic numerals. After 1707, fractional parts of a penny are written half pence and farthings, in the way we are now accustomed to.

We find that in 1672, the overseers paid Francis Connop £1. 5*s*. "for setting Robert Thompson's bones," —had he broken many ?—and 18 pecks of rye were given to Thompson. Rye seems to have been largely grown, rye bread is good for food, and rye straw the best for thatching. There had been so much rye and so much buckwheat too produced in 1627 and 1634, that the farmers about Woodbridge petitioned for leave to export both grains.

At the Archdeacon's visitation (known as the "Generals") of 1673, at which John Hacket attended, much fault was found with the repair of both the chancel and the body of the church. It was required to "repaire the roofe of the chancell; to playster and white the same; to repaire the seates in chancell; to provide a

white cloth for the communion table; to mende the butteries (buttresses) about the church; to destroye the Ivy about the church steeple; to lyne the pulpit and reading deske; to mende the seates about the churche; to mende the chancell doore; to remove the rubbish out of the church yarde. These to be certified at the next Generals."

At the Generals in 1674, Hacket appeared, but John Fenn and Robert Usher the churchwardens were excommunicated for non-appearance. The court required that these things among others should be done: "to provide a hoode[1]; to repaire the chancell in ye thatching; to white the same where it is decayed; to provide locks and keys for the great church chest; to white the south ile of the church."

In that year 1674, an agreement was made between John Hacket the Rector, and his parishoners, that the customs should be settled as under:

"For every acre of mowing meadow being made into hay or mowen, 4*d.*
For the lactage of every cowe by the yeare, 2*d.*
For every gast (barren) beast, and every yearling bud (calf), and foal falling, 1*d.*
For every gast cow giving milk yearly, 2*d.*
For calves and lambes under seven, 1*d.* Then to have a tenth calf or lamb, 1*d.*
Every tenth or seventh pig.
For scumming (roughly mowing) of pasture grounds, 2*d.* yearly.
If any crop of turnips shall be drawn to sell or to feed fat cattle, tithe in kind; but if spent only in feeding milch cows, nothing."

This very early mention of turnip culture as a farm crop is noteworthy. It has been said by good authority, that the root was first used for winter sheep feed, ten years later.

[1] Now, I suppose graduate clergy themselves supply the hoods proper to their degree and University; and Literates their fancy tippets.

We have the names of the parishioners who were assessed for hearth tax in 1674. The largest payers were William Mitchells for thirteen hearths, a "Mr. Tompson" for ten hearths; Thomas Ingham had four, Gabriel Ingham five, and John Fenn only three. In which houses these persons lived, we have no means now of ascertaining.

In 1675, for a poor funeral, a cheerful charge was made "for beer, cakes, and a winding sheet, 3*s*."

That year, both Hacket and his churchwardens were again admonished; the ivy about the steeple was to be forthwith cut; the Bible had two or three leaves loose; the register book was to be kept in the church chest; the chancel thatch was exceedingly decayed, in so much that it lay open to the weather in a great part thereof, and the vermin thereby got in and very much "annoyed the church and chancel"; and the walls thereof were exceeding green and foul; the seats were decayed; the windows were decayed; there was a linen communion cloth, but, it was added, Mr. Hackett kept it from the churchwardens.

Hacket did not attend the Generals in 1676. The monitions of the year before had not been obeyed yet; they were now repeated with additions, among which was an order to "cleere ye churchyard of bryers, brakes, and thornes, and to certifie the Court after Christmas."

In 1677, a rate was made at Theberton, under an Act of Parliament, for the building of thirty ships of war for the defence and honour of His Majesty and his kingdom. In that year too, a fee was paid to Mr. Bedingfeild for advice about a pauper, "Mr. Bedingfeild's Worship's" home was at Benhall.

On the 9th of October 1677, two men were chosen for constables, "at His Matis Courte Leete kept for the

Soake of Laiston for the yeare to end at St. Michael 1678." We have seen that a yearly Court Leet had been held by the Abbots as lords of the Soke; but these old English tribunals date back to ages before abbots or abbey. Another name of the same ancient Court was the "View of Frank Pledge"; it being its province to view the Frank Pledges, that is the freemen of a Liberty, who under the Laws of Alfred the Great were pledges for each other's behaviour. From the parish of Theberton, a "soake fee" has been paid down to quite recent times. It ceased however before living memory; the present steward of Leiston manor knows nothing about it.

In 1666, an Act had been passed which, with a view to encourage the manufacture of woollen, enacted that all dead bodies should be wrapped in woollen only; and by a later Act of 1678, the clergy were required to enter in the register the receipt by them of affidavits that the law had been complied with.

The first entry we find under the latter Act is as follows:—For the year 1678: "John ffenne wheelewright was buryed 24 Octobris in woollen in Theberton Churchyard. Jane Thompson widdow, and Margaret the wife of Henrie Bruce being both of the Parish of Theberton, on the 29th day of October, made affidavitt thereof before Thomas Eliot Esquire Justice of Peace for Suff, two witnesses being then present, which by the said Justice was then accordingly certified."

John Fenn seems to have been well respected in Theberton, having served all the parish offices: churchwarden, overseer, surveyor, and fen reeve; he was buried by the great porch door of the church, where, over his brick tomb a flat covering stone bears this quaint inscription:—

"The Stone to Sitt Upon."

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"HERE IS A STONE TO SITT VPON
VNDER WHICH LIES IN HOPES TO RISE
TO YE DAY OF BLISSE AND HAPPINESSE
HONEST JOHN FENN THE SONN
OF WILLIAM FENN CLARKE AND
LATE RECTOR OF THIS PARISH
BEING TURNED OUT OF THIS
LIVEING AND SEQVESTRED FOR
HIS LOYALTY TO THE LATE
KING CHARLES THE FIRST
HEE DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE
22 DAY OF OCTOBER ANNO DOM.
1678."

When we had fair congregations at Theberton, one might, any Sunday, see men sitting upon the stone, before the afternoon service.

One wonders who composed the inscription—perhaps John Fenn himself in his lifetime—a loyal son desirous of clearing his father's memory.

Rates were made in 1680, for "ye disbanding the Army,"—that army which, three years before, had been raised on pretence of war with our contemptible King's secret patron, Louis XIV. of France.

The overseers had, in 1681, to pay the widow Hansell *1s. 6d.* a week for keeping the "Moather London," elsewhere called "London's girle." Suffolk folk still call a girl a "mawther."

By an inventory of "goods wich weare the widow Tompson's"—Mrs. Tompson having died indebted to the parish—we gain a peep into a poor Theberton cottage of the seventeenth century.

"A Invtory of the goods wich weare the widow Tompson's who departed this life the 15 day of June, Ano Dominij 1681."

	£.	s.	d.
Imprimis one bed and bedsteds mat and line ten bousters 3 pilowes and a Couvlet and a blanckett .	1	16	6
Ite one cubert and a keepe	0	6	0
Ite fouer tabels and 2 formes	0	10	6
Ite fouer befott stewls	0	2	0

	£	s.	d.
Ite 3 Chayrs and 3 cushens and 2 other stewls	0	1	8
Ite 4 peauter dishes 3 sausers and 2 poringers one Candilstick and a saltsiler	0	2	9
Ite Scales and waights	0	1	6
Ite 2 Citels 4 skilets [1] 2 Brasen candelsticks and a fring pan and a warming pan and a laten dripping pan .	0	12	4
Ite 2 Iarne pots poot hoocks and leds (lids)	0	10	6
Ite a pair of cobandorns and a gridiorn and a fire pan and tongs and a pesell and a ould Chafing Dish and 2 hacks a smelkost a box iron	0	3	10
Ite 3 treving platers and 11 dishes and one dusen of trenchers	0	1	2
Ite 2 Earthing pans and a earthing sauser	0	0	4
Ite 2 Cuppes and a tunell (funnel)	0	0	2
Ite one Chist and a Cofer and a desk and trunck and 2 ould boxes	0	7	0
Ite one spise boxe and a pesell and morter	0	0	7
Ite for seurall Boocks	0	2	0
Ite 2 wescots 2 petcots and a hatte	0	9	0
Ite 4 napckins one bord cloth	0	3	4
Ite for 3 shetts and 4 pilowbers	0	17	0
Ite for 2 saupans	0	2	2
Ite for ij neck hanckirs	0	6	0
Ite fouer piners with the rest of hir wearing lining . .	0	4	0
Ite one scarfe and 3 hoods	0	3	0
Ite for 3 ould Cors sheets one shifning 2 pilowbers . .	0	4	0
Ite one loocking glase	0	0	3
Ite one bed more bedsteds and line	0	11	0
Ite 2 ould Cofers and one ould desk	0	1	6
Ite one Courlett belong to this bed	0	2	0
Sum of Totis	£7	12	1

Thes things weare prised by Thomas Belward and Thomas Weller.

How the "sum of totis" was dealt with we have no record, perhaps nought remained after reimbursing the parish. In another account, a surplus was applied in "redeeming a poore townesman out of prison."

The accounts that year were allowed by Justices John Bedingfeild and Edmund Bohun.

Edmund Bohun of Westhall Hall is an interesting

[1] Small kettles or boilers.

study. "Bred a dissenter from the religion," which was established in the Church of England; he grew to be a royalist of royalists, a church-man of church-men. The Bohuns were an old family, but Edmund's fortune did not match his birth. An ambitious, honest, clever, contentious man; sometimes a magistrate delivering charges at quarter sessions; twice if not thrice, left out of the commission; a treasurer for maimed soldiers; a learned and rather voluminous author; licenser of the press; persecuted by political enemies; brought to the bar of the House of Commons; a friend, then not a friend, of the non-juring Archbishop Sancroft who was born and died in the near parish of Fressingfield. His life passed in eventful times; and in 1699 he died, aged 56, "the upright and free spoken, but persecuted and unfortunate, Chief Justice" of South Carolina.

To his diary, edited with accurate notes, by the late Mr. Rix of Beccles, I am much indebted. In May 1677, he jots down, "I went to our nearest gaol—at Blythborough—to give bail for Mr. John Hacket, a clergyman long and wretchedly oppressed"; and the following month he wrote, "with some astonishment, I have seen and watched the horrible and base conduct of G. E. towards Mr. John Hacket clerk." Who G. E. was we do not know. Probably John Hacket was our parson of Theberton. If so, why he was in prison we have now no means of ascertaining. There is ground for surmise that he was impecunious, and he certainly was engaged in litigation. The 1675 parish accounts state that the churchwardens paid "for ten journeys, to Yoxford court and Halesworth, about Mr. Hackett's suits, &c., 14*s.*"; and again in 1683, we find: "Paid to discharge the charges of suit commenced

by John Hacket against severall of the parishioners £2. 15*s.* 0*d.*"

But even were he by his own fault wretchedly oppressed, yet, if he served in that good fight, the battle of Sole Bay, we surely may take pride in our one man-of-war parson of Theberton.

Having mentioned for earlier times, the wages of servants in husbandry, it may be useful, for purpose of comparison, to state them for the time now under consideration.

Sir John Cullum tells us what the Bury quarter sessions (acting under a statute of Elizabeth) settled in West Suffolk for 1682. Wages for East Suffolk were no doubt much the same.

The West Suffolk wages were as follows:—

By the year:—

	£	*s.*	*d*
A bailiff in husbandry	6	0	0
A chief husbandman or carter	5	0	0
A second hind or husbandman a common servant above 18	3	10	0
A fourth under 18	2	10	0
A dairymaid or cook	2	10	0
The best hired servant with meat and drink for harvest	1	2	0
An ordinary harvest man		18	0

Wages by the day:—

A man hay maker with meat and drink	5
A woman hay maker	3
A man reaper in harvest	10
A woman reaper	6
A common labourer at other times:—	
In summer	6
In winter	5
Women and such persons weeders	3

Without meat and drink their wages were doubled.

In our parish accounts, an ordinary annual charge is for "Bill indented." Bills indented were copies of the register for a year past, handed in at the "Generals."

Another item occurring regularly is Christmas box for the "pariter"—apparitor. In the days of power of Courts-Christian, apparitors—"so called because their duty was to summon persons to appear," their older title having been sompnours or summoners—had been substantial nuisances; they were now little better than shadows, seldom becoming visible, unless in the sun of Christmas boxes.

CHAPTER XII

The exact date of Hacket's death I do not know; as in our register there is no entry of his burial, I presume that he did not die at Theberton; it may have been at sea; I hope not in the gaol at Blythburgh.

In 1683, came his successor Robert Witchingham or Wychingham, presented to the benefice by the King.

The year after, we see that the new rector attended the "Generals;" when the Court, finding that its former monitions had not been effective, ordered that "the wholes in the roofe of the chancell" be stopped; a new "cushing board" for the pulpit be provided; that a hood be provided; that the pulpit and reading desk be lined; that a green cloth be provided for the communion table; and that the churchyard be fenced.

And two years after that, the churchwardens were further admonished to get a new cushion for the pulpit; and to "stopp the hole out of the steeple into the church, to keepe the doves from annoying the church."[1]

[1] We read in the third Homily of the second Book, published at the accession of Elizabeth "On the repairing and keeping clean of Churches," that "Churches were formerly defiled with sinful and superstitious filthiness, but though they had been scoured and swept clean from that, they were then defiled with rain and weather, with dung of doves and owls, stares, and choughs, and other filthiness, as it was foul and lamentable to behold."

Wychingham and the churchwardens were evidently in the mind to be obedient. The monitions of 1684 had been in some part obeyed already; some needful repairs had been done; the lift gate, by which the churchyard was then entered, had been put to rights; the pulpit had been heightened; and both pulpit and reading desk been bound and fringed. Now, the poor pulpit of good oak was coloured; the thatch of the church was mended with straw; and the whole church whitened inside—this at a cost of £2. 5*s*. 0*d*.; a new cushion was bought for the pulpit at £1. 4*s*. 0*d*.; and the hole was stopped up in the steeple.

In 1686, we had another valuation of the town of Theberton. The whole rental value was set at £920. The rectory was now again assessed at £60; Edmund Jenney had regained possession of the manor, and for it was set down at £6 a year; Thomas Ingham for Theberton Hall at £60 per annum. The Eastbridge inn must then have been a better hostelry than the present cottage, for its value was set down at £30 a year.

For 1686 also, we find a deed of settlement of the Jenney estate in Theberton; in which it is stated that Edmund Jenney was then seised in fee of the manor or lordship of Theberton, and of the capital messuage, Theberton Hall.

In 1687, the overseers had to pay, on behalf of a poor person, a charge for "hearthmoney." This tax, imposed in Charles II.'s time, has come down to our day in the unwelcome form of Inhabited House Duty.

A Justice who allowed the overseers' rate for this year was—Leman. The Christian name is not legible in his signature, but he was Thomas Leman of Wenhaston

whom Bohun describes in his diary. Bohun says that in 1677 he was "a young man of very great promise, and of ample patrimony, fond of learning and already imbued with it, sedate and courteous." There is a gracefully worded inscription to his memory in Wenhaston Church.

Our churchyard was paled round in 1688, at a total cost of £2. 14*s.* 6*d.*

There is no more to tell about our parish for that year, but the year was memorable in the annals of the kingdom. On December 11th, King James II. fled; and a few days after, our Suffolk diarist, Bohun, was present in London, when the Prince of Orange was met, he says, "with such transports of joy as I have never seen."

In 1689, the Rectory was assessed at one-third of the valuation of three years before, viz: £20.

That year, Sir John Playters of Sotterley allowed the overseers' rate. In this account, occur charges for beer and cake at a poor woman's funeral; two racks of veal for a widow; and 7*s.* 10*d.* to one Mr. Thorne "for chirurgioning a man's sore legs." Butchers do not cut racks of veal now in Suffolk, but they are common joints still in Ireland.

In 1690, the church thatch had again to be mended; a "hurry" of thatch, broaches and binding, were charged 11*s.* A "hurry" is, or was, a local expression for a small load.

In 1691, Thomas Ingham was rated for the Hall, and paid 4*s.* 4*d.* churchwarden's rate.

One William Raine agreed, that year, with the parishioners of Theberton, that he would "keep Robert Heasell with meat drinck apparrell lodgeing and washing a yeare," at 30*s.*! The Justices who signed that year were "J Rous" and "Thomas Neale." The first

was Sir John Rous of Henham, a neighbour and friend of Bohun the diarist; and the second, Thomas Neale of Bramfield, the same, I think, who dying in 1701, left money to build Almshouses still occupied in that village. He was one of the first trustees of the old Dissenting Chapel founded at Lowestoft in 1695.

Thomas Ingham was again, in 1692, rated for "Ye Hall." When, that year, a warrant was issued to assess a poll tax, there was in it this direction: "you are hereby further required to give notice to all such persons as are assessed as gentlemen within yr town, that they come before some of the Commissioners before the Generall day of Appeals be out, and take the oathes to their present Majesties (William and Mary), or otherwise they must be assessed double according to the Act." Thomas Ingham was not too proud to describe himself as "malster."

At an archdeacon's visitation in 1693, Wychingham being incumbent of Theberton, we learn that, of church plate there was a silver cup and patten, with a pewter flagon; that the church then wanted thatching; the ivy to be cut; and the chancel to be paved. The valuation of the town was stated to be £500 per annum, the Rectory being put at £30 per annum *communibus annis*, one year with another. There was only one service each Sunday, so it seems probable that Wychingham had another living, and had his residence elsewhere. He was, later at all events, the rector also of Buxlow.

That whoever lived at our Rectory was not given to hospitality, the Archdeacon's itinerary bears witness. On the fourth day of his visitation, the 3rd. of August, 1693, his earliest visit was arranged for Knoddishall; thence on to Aldringham, Leiston, Theberton, Middleton Darsham, Westleton, Dunwich, ending with Walbers-

wick. A good day's work! The hours fixed for Theberton were 10 o'clock to noon; and there the dignitary looked for his dinner; for opposite that appointment, had been written "*ad prandium*"; but that the *prandium* was not to his liking, is shown by a later note against Theberton "not to dine next time."

In 1694, the warrant for Poll Tax to be sent up from Theberton, was signed "C. Blois, Geo. Fleetwood, Jo. Rabett." Sir Charles Blois was the first baronet, and the first of his family to possess Cockfield Hall; Geo. Fleetwood was of Chediston, a younger son of the Lord Deputy of Ireland; and John Rabett was, I take it, a member of an ancient family, the Rabetts of Bramfield.

Towards a poor rate in 1695, I find "Hangman's Acre" was assessed at an *obolus*. Where this ill-omened acre was, or who had been hanged there, is not known to this deponent.

The silver coinage having been robbed by clipping, it became necessary in 1696, to provide for a new coinage by Act of Parliament. Under that Act we find that Thos. Wright and Thos. Foulsham had to assess the parish of Theberton, for duties "for making good the deficiency of cliped money." This involved a statement of the taxed windows of every house in the parish. Not a house, it appeared, had more lights than the rectory, which had twenty. Of seven other houses one, that of Edmund Jenney, had twenty also; and of six remaining, I suppose farm houses, one had nineteen, one sixteen, three had ten, one nine.

We get a rough idea of the state of education in Theberton from a list made that year of men who took the oath to King William III. The list contains fifty-five names of male inhabitants of the parish; twenty-nine were marksmen, and among these illiterates were persons holding lands valued at £43, £24, and £20 a year.

On Easter Monday 1697, the townsmen let to Richard Cheston "Tylers Green." The page of the account is very imperfect, one can only make out that the rent was 10*s.*, and that the said Cheston was to clear the green of bushes.

In 1698, the rateable value of the parish including rectory and manor was £478. 10*s.*

Another assessment was made in 1702, for grants to Her Majesty by dues and subsidies and a land tax. The point of interest to us is the insight it gives into the domesticities of some of the persons of our story. We find that parson Wychingham had a wife and three children and two servants; Edmund Jenney gent. a wife and likewise three children, with three servants; Thomas Ford, I think a farmer, the same; John Foulsham the same family and number of servants as the rector; and Thomas Ingham "malster" had a wife, four children and three servants. Personal property was then assessed, as in justice it should be still, for the tax misleadingly called land tax.

I find a curious account concerning a parish pauper. The goods of one John Haggudday were sold for £3. 7*s.* 11*d.*; with which the overseers credit themselves, and add the produce of forty weeks' collection £4. Against this are set these items of charge:

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Paid to Dr. Peake for cutting of John Haggudday's leg	5	0	0
To John Thorne for healing it	5	5	0
Item—for removing of his goods twice		5	0
Item—for his nurse		12	0
Item—for beere for his doctor and the tounesmen at 2 severall times		5	6
Item—for a quart of butter for him		1	0
Item—bread for him		2	3
Item—For wooding legg for him		7	0
Item—His half years rent		13	0

The balance was of course a charge upon the rates. John Thorne is in the accounts described as apothecary;

but in the manor book, I find a devise by one Philip Thorne of land in the parish, to John Thorne of Theberton "chirurgion."

When Dutch William was on the throne, his Parliament spread such a net for taxation, that no man escaped its meshes. We all have to be born, to die, and then to be buried, and all men living are either bachelors, or married, or widowers. An ingenious act swept them all in. A tax was imposed upon bachelors and widowers, on marriages and births; dead men had to pay too, for there was a tax upon burials. The rate was on a sliding scale in proportion to rank—from 1*s.* to £12 a year for bachelors and widowers, from 2*s.* 6*d.* to £50 on marriages, from 2*s.* to £30 on births, and one could not be buried under 1*s.* rising to £12. 10*s.* In the 1705 accounts, I find "For duty for Brissingham's burial 4*s.* 6*d.*" The tax only lasted five years. When women get their votes, will bachelors and widowers have to suffer again?

The 19th of January 1704 was at Theberton and throughout all England, observed, in obedience to Queen Anne's proclamation, as a day of public fast and humiliation, for "the terrible and dreadful storms of wind" of 26th and 27th of November 1703, when it was computed that eight thousand persons perished. The loss in London was said to have been more serious than that caused by the Great Fire of 1666. "Houses were mostly stripped and appeared like so many skeletons; the lead which covered one hundred churches, and many public buildings, was rolled up and hurled in prodigious quantities, to distances almost incredible." In Kent alone, one observer numbered seventeen thousand trees, all torn up by the roots. Most of our men-of-war were safe at sea; but fifteen or sixteen were cast away, and

more than two thousand seamen perished. A squadron under Rear Admiral Beaumont was then lying in the Downs; the flagship and several other ships were wrecked on Goodwin Sands. Eddystone Lighthouse was destroyed; and the architect Winstanley, who was in it, perished. Fortunately for shipping at sea off our East Coast the gale was from the westward; the effects on the opposite coast of Holland were disastrous. No note remains of damage done at Theberton.

For 1706, the overseer's rate was allowed by John Bence, Esqre, owner from 1700 to 1719, of the Heveningham Hall of that day. Mr. Bence served in his time, as member for Dunwich, and for Ipswich.

Now was severed the ancient connection of the Jenneys with Theberton. Edmund Jenney in 1704, had sold the manor and the Theberton Hall estate to John Fuller. Mr. Fuller held his first court in 1705. In the record, we find mention of two place names, Lott fen, and Golibau fen, which I cannot identify.

The Ingham of the time was the Thomas Ingham whose mural monument is in the chancel of our church. Like others of his family, he seems to have been an active and thriving man. He was steward of the manor of Theberton. In 1703, he hired the rectorial rights of Aldringham. He was also bailiff of the Leiston Abbey estate, in which capacity his accounts show that he "paid for seven dayes workes of three men to take down part of the tower and cleane the bricke." Among our church plate a flagon bears the words "*ex dono Thome Ingham.*" The mural monument is thus inscribed:—

"In the church yard, near this place, lye interred the bodies of Thomas Ingham gentleman late of this parish, and Milicent his wife. The said Thomas departed this

life the 19th day of March 1720, in the seventieth year of his age, and the said Milicent departed this life the ninth day of June 1708, in the fifty-sixth of her age." Upon it is emblazoned the arms of Ingham, impaled with those of his wife.

There are three stones outside the south aisle door; one inscribed "Thomas Ingham and Milicent his wife"; on another can just be deciphered "William Ingham"; of the third the inscription is weathered away, and is now undecipherable. William is described in the manor book as William Ingham of Theberton "gentleman."

We have the will of Thomas Ingham. He seems to have lent money on mortgage, and foreclosed mortgages, and picked up land whenever the price suited him. He devised land in ten parishes besides Theberton, and bequeathed nearly £4000 in legacies, some to pay expenses for schools and for universities and apprenticeships for his grandchildren.

In 1705, clothing was purchased by the overseers for apprenticing a "town boy." Persons to whom parish apprentices were allotted, were compellable to take them, often an unwelcome duty. A few years later, John Foulsham paid £5 to our parish rather than take an apprentice. Such bargains were formally recorded. For example this from the town book of an adjoining parish—"Whereas the parish of Middleton with Fordley have allotted Ann Courtnell as an apprentice to me, I hereby promise to pay to ye overseer of the Poor of ye said parish two pounds ten shillings per year for four years, at four quarterly payments yearly and every year, the said parish excuseing me an apprentice, till the said child be twenty one years of age—witness my hand, Charles Ingham."

Posts and pales were, as they are now, an expensive

sort of fencing—boys will be boys. A new fence of that kind round the churchyard, cost £8 in 1705.

Foxes were at this time common in our district. In 1708, was paid 6*s.* for six foxes' heads, and such payments for vermin become more common later.

It had been enacted in the reign of Elizabeth, that two honest and substantial persons in each parish, should be named "dystributors of the provision for the destructyon of noyful fowells and vermyn," and they were authorised to pay:

For three crows, choughs, pies, or rooks heads	1*d.*
For every six eggs or young birds	1*d.*
For every twelve starlings eggs	1*d.*
For the heads of other ravenous byrds and vermyn as or hereafter in this acte mentioned that is to say:—	
For everye head of martyn, hawke, furskett, mold kytte, busard, schagge, cormorant, ryngtayle	2*d.*
For every two eggs of theirs	1*d.*
For everye yron (erne) or osprey's head	4*d.*
For the head of every woodwall,[1] pye, jay, raven, or kytte .	1*d.*
For the head of everye byrd which is called the kyngfisher .	1*d.*
For the head of everye bulfynche, or other byrd that devourythe the blowthe or frute	1*d.*
For the head of every fox or gray (badger)	12*d.*
And for the head of everye fytchene, polcatte, wesell, stott, fayrebode, or wylde catte	1*d.*
For the head of everye otter, or hedgehogg	2*d.*
And, for the heads of three ratts, or twelve myse	1*d.*

A small payment was also to be made for heads of moles.

All owners of lands and tithes were chargeable for these payments: they were made by the churchwardens

[1] The editor of *Bell's Chaucer* says that the "woodewale" is the oriole or golden ousle, a bird of the thrush kind; and quotes from the ballad of Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne: "The woodweele sang and wolde not cease, sitting upon the spraye." Chaucer himself writes of "Alpes fynches and wodewales"—we call bullfinches "alpes" in Suffolk. Could it have been such a harmless bird as this which was doomed to destruction as a "noyful fowell," associated with pies, jays, ravens, and kites?

out of their rate. The scale appears to have been punctiliously adhered to.

In 1708, an abstract of an Act about Briefs was paid for by the parish. What we of Suffolk now know as a brief, is a private appeal for help, to compensate some poor person for a disabling loss. These statutory briefs were very different. Under the Act, to a person desirous of raising money, called the undertaker, a brief was issued out of Chancery. Copies were printed by the Queen's printers. The undertaker got these stamped, and distributed to ministers and churchwardens. Ministers read the brief to their congregations next before the sermon. The money collected was handed with the briefs to the undertaker, who had to render an account to the master in Chancery.

How expensive this cumbrous machinery was, may be seen from this account concerning another county:

For the parish church of Ravenstondale:—

	£.	s.	d.
Lodging the certificate	0	7	6
Fiat and signing	19	4	2
Letters Patent	21	18	2
Printing and paper	16	0	0
Teller and porter	0	5	0
Stamping	13	12	6
Copy of the brief	0	5	0
Portage to and from the stampers	0	5	0
Matts &c. for packing	0	4	0
Portage to the waggons	0	4	0
Carriage to the undertakers at Stafford	1	11	6
Postage of letters and certificate	0	4	8
Clerk's fees	2	2	0
	76	3	6
Salary for 9986 briefs at 6*d.* each	249	13	0
Additional salary for London	5	0	0
	£330	16	6

Collected on 9986 briefs	614	12	9
Charges	330	16	6
Clear collection	283	16	3

Collections	9986
Blanks	503
Total	10489

It is evident that more than half the receipts were devoured by unconscionable fees and piled up expenses.

A house called the Moll House was assessed for window duty in 1710. If it exists, the house is known by that name no longer.

In 1712, Robert Wychingham was rated for twenty-nine windows in his rectory. One other house in the parish had twenty-nine also, and two were rated for thirty. That year the church was paved with brick, the bushes were stubbed up in the churchyard—they constantly had to be stubbed—and a new "surpliss" was purchased for the parson. The year after, the churchwardens paid £4. 10*s.* for the Queen's arms, Lord's Prayer, and Commandments.

CHAPTER XIII

QUEEN ANNE'S reign lasted but little longer, she died in 1714; and then, our first King "George, in pudding time came o'er" from Hanover.

That year, the churchwardens' account charged the parish with a proclamation to alter ye service book on the death of the Princess Sophia *6d.*; another proclamation on the death of Queen Anne *6d.*; and three others for the Prince of Wales, the Princess and Royal Family, and for the clergy *6d.* each; and the ringing on ye Thanksgiving, *2s.*; and a proclamation to prevent profaneness.

In the fifth year of Queen Anne's reign, an Act had been passed at her instance, which conferred a great boon upon the Church in general, and on our Rectory in particular.

An oppressive burden upon benefices had been the imposition known as First Fruits, of old payable to the Pope, and since the Reformation to the Crown. Its origin was in this wise: By ancient feudal law, a superior lord was, on the death of a tenant-in-chivalry, entitled to "primer seisin": that is to enter into seisin or possession of the tenant's land, and to enjoy its profits, till the heir should, within a year and a day, appear to claim investiture. Analogously, the Popes claiming to be feudal lords of the church, had extorted in that usurped

capacity from English incumbents a year's profits of their livings, as *primitiæ* or First Fruits. Now, by this generous Act of the Queen, poor livings under £50 a year were exempted and discharged from First Fruits; the bishops were to inform themselves, by the oaths of witnesses or other lawful means, of the value of all livings whereof the clear proved annual value did not exceed £50, and were to certify the same into the exchequer.

The Archbishop of the Province, as guardian of the Spiritualities of the See of Norwich then vacant, appointed commissioners to take evidence. Mr. Wychingham had to appear before them, with two or more credible witnesses, and with his "terrars," books of account, and other needful documents. The commissioners gave notice that voluntary gifts and contributions would not be reckoned, but only such things as were perpetually annexed to the living, and which an incumbent could legally demand; and on the other hand that taxes, poor rates, repairs, charge of curate, would not be allowed. In the result, the clear improved yearly value of the living of Theberton was returned at £31. 13*s.* 4*d.*; and it was accordingly discharged from first fruits.

In 1715, occurred an outbreak of smallpox, and charges for poor sufferers swelled the overseers' rate. It was a deadly disease then, when not even such protection as inoculation could afford, was available.

The rate of 1716 was allowed by Thomas Betts, Esquire, of Yoxford; he was son of the "Justice Betts" often referred to in our parish books, who possessed property in Theberton, and to whose memory there is a handsome monument in Yoxford church. He came of a junior branch of an old Suffolk family—Betts of Wortham.

Miss Hannah Fuller, upon whom the manor of Theberton had devolved, held her first Court in 1719.

In 1720, the way from Theberton church to "le common de Theberton" is mentioned in the manor book.

The rate of 1721 was allowed by Robert Jenney, Esquire, born like so many of his ancestors in Theberton, but then described as of Leiston. Of Knoddishall would have been his proper description.

In 1722, William Bradley held his first Court as lord of the manor; he had married Hannah Fuller. In the overseers' bill that year, an entry of 5*s.* for "2 Duble Cats" puzzled this investigator, till at last it dawned upon him that "2 duplicates" of some document, must have been intended.

In 1723, Thomas Carthew, Esquire, allowed the rate; he was, I think, owner of Benacre Hall and Woodbridge Abbey, but seems to have been then resident at Leiston.

Robert Wychingham having resigned the living, his son and namesake was presented and instituted to succeed him in 1724. This younger Robert Wychingham had, in 1718 or 1719, married Elizabeth daughter of the Thomas Ingham before mentioned, who left her land which he had purchased from Daniel Harvey Esqr. and a legacy of £100.

Foxes' heads were still brought in, and paid for, weasels too, and "poulcatts" and "roks"; one item of payment was for sixty five "roks." In 1725, a man who had had his tongue cut out by the Turks got 2*s.* from the parish; and, at the bishop's visitation at Beccles that year, the churchwardens paid "to ye Bishop 9*s.* to ye Minister 5*s.* and to ye Apparitor 1*s.*"

In 1728, the parish officers "spent at the Coronation the sum of one guinnie." Cannot one see the convivial

old fellows in those "bushes of vanity" their wigs, broad skirted coats, big-flapped waistcoats, their stockings rolled above the knee, sitting round a table in the cosy parlour of the Lion, having hung their three-cornered hats on pegs about the walls, drinking King George's health, with all the more gusto that they had not to pay for the liquor. Wychingham may have been of the party; but there was difference between him and the overseers —see this entry in their account: "lost by ye rate which Mr. Whittingham (Wychingham) paid short 4*s.* 4*d.*"

A poor man's goods inventoried that year, included three spinning-wheels, and "1 Lomb" meaning I think a loom. The man's settlement was in Theberton, but he had been living in Norfolk where the woollen manufacture had its principal home. He may, however, have been a linen weaver, for this was an industry of our neighbourhood. The reputation of Halesworth market ten miles from Theberton, was in 1720, due chiefly to "its plenty of linen yarn which the women spun, partly for the use of families and partly for sale, which being readily bought was esteemed a good commodity for trade."[1]

In 1729, a new church window was paid for, £3. 5*s.*; it was no doubt inserted in one of the ancient openings.

In that year's overseers' account, charges occur which at first glance do not explain themselves:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
"For a lycence and marrying Tho. Scarlett	1	7	0
Two orders and his examination		6	0
Eating and drinking at my house		18	6
Expenses and carrying away		4	6
Going to ye Justices about ye orders . . .		1	0"

[1] We find a man described as a "linnen weaver" on the rolls of the Manor of Middleton Chickering in 1779. In another inventory is noted a powdering tub.

Scarlett, not belonging to Theberton, was persuaded to wed a pauper girl, and so take a burden off the parish; and paupers could not be removed without a justice's order. The parish was the poor man's Providence; in this case, it provided Scarlett with a wife; and in another we find it paying a heavy doctor's bill —"Doctor Manning's bill for ye cure of John Clarke £15."

Parishes were then indeed small republics, not as now mere geographical expressions; they made and levied their own rates, and expended their own monies, they maintained the one church in which all the people worshipped, they relieved their own poor and provided their own poor house, repaired their roads, managed their common lands. The "occupiers" served each parish office in its turn; of churchwarden place of most dignity, of overseer the "father-in-law of the parish," of surveyor, of constable, and, in Theberton, of fen-reeve. The duties of these officers were more important than is often recognised, and were wholly unpaid. But they brought humble men into relations with social superiors, the bishop, archdeacon, parson and justices; trained them in independence of thought and of action; and initiated them into, at least the elements, of municipal law and of public business. The system had of course many drawbacks, which writers have held up to ridicule; but I venture to think that in these bureaucratic days of Boards and paid clerks and paid inspectors, we do not hear enough of its advantages.

At Easter town meetings, discussion would perhaps wax warm on occasion; but, adjourning to the Lion, merry-go-downs of sparkling ale would cool heated tempers. In 1731, I find a coomb of malt was "brewed against Easter," costing the parish 10*s*. That year perhaps, a good object justified the extravagance, for

the health of a new rector had to be properly honoured.

Robert Wychingham the younger, after a short incumbency, had died in 1730, and Robert Hacon now reigned in his stead, having become also vicar of Westleton. There had been an interregnum, when the "Rev. Mr. Revett" carried on the duty, and the living was under sequestration, for we find that Mr. Peter Ingham paid *7s. 6d.* to the Chancellor "in 1730, for ye sequestration of Theberton." The Chancellor then was Dr. Tanner, author of "Notitia Monastica" and afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph, who presented his great collection of MSS.—how obtained no one knows—to the Bodleian Library.

Mr. Hacon lost no time before beginning at his own expense alterations to his rectorial property. What "the ancient gate house belonging to the parish of Theberton" was like, I cannot tell, but he converted it into a threshing floor, and also enlarged the tithe barn—this in his first year of office; and, the next year he put in a new chancel door, and beautified and adorned his chancel with sentences; also he laid reed on part of the roof, and repaired the walls of the chancel. Both the gatehouse and barn had been mentioned in the terrier of 1635, which has been already referred to.

We now find the first notice of a "warrant to watch and ward," for which *1s.* was paid to the constable. Blackstone tells us that men refusing to keep watch by night and ward by day, to apprehend robbers and rioters on the highways when ordered by the constable, might be presented at Quarter Sessions.

The presentment of constables to a court of Quarter Sessions in 1736, shows the various duties of such officers succinctly:—"The poor are provided for, the stocks and whipping post in good repair, hues and cries duly

pursued, highways and bridges in repair, warrants executed, watch and ward duly kept, and all things belonging to my office are in good order, to the best of my knowledge."

We have also an item of charge for "Marshall money," properly Marshalsea money, a statutory tax then levied upon parishes by High Constables of Hundreds, for relief of the poor prisoners in the Marshalsea. Bridge money was also among the constables' charges.

Much has been made of parish officers expending public money on private festivities. I have not found a trace of dishonest expenditure in Theberton. The brewing of a coomb of malt on a rare occasion has been noticed ; only one other case I think of like extravagance appears in the parish accounts ; it was then for a perambulation.

In 1732, a sum of 5*s.* was paid for "Phaba Booth's pennance," and also a payment to "the Spiritual Court, for charges and citations in order for Penance and for sending Penance."

In an interesting account of Wenhaston, a parish a few miles from Theberton, we find the schedule of a like penance suffered in this same year by one Priscilla.

I quote a part of the schedule :

> "The said Priscilla. . . . shall be present in the parish church of Wenhaston on some Sunday before the first day of December, standing penitently in the middle alley before the minister's seat or pulpit, clothed in a white sheet, holding a white rod or wand in her hand, having a paper pinned upon her breast describing her fault or sin ; and then and there, in such sort, to continue during the whole time of divine service and sermon ; and at the end

of the same, before the congregation is dismissed and the blessing given, shall upon her knees make her humble confession, repeating every word after the minister as followeth" :

I need go no further.

. . . . . .

Poor Phaba Booth! Like Priscilla's, no doubt, was the penance she underwent at Theberton. How cruel and how pitiful; heads craning from each pew to stare at her a figure of degradation in her white sheet trying to hide her face in her long hair. And this in our own familiar church, less than two hundred years ago. On a like occasion in another parish, it is upon record that the cries of a poor penitent girl melted the hearts of the congregation, and raised so great a storm, as to put an end, once for all, to such inhuman spectacles.

In 1732, I find the earliest notice of a name yet surviving among us—"Thomas Bailey for a weesell 3*d*."

In 1733, a new parish clerk and sexton had to be appointed. In Roman Catholic times, this inferior minister used often to be a clerk in orders, who "aquæbajulus" as he was called, ministered to the priest with the holy water; and still he was an official of parish consequence; useful, and capable as Doctor Johnson said, "to make a will, or write a letter for anybody," and a universal father to give away the brides, and stand godfather to new born bantlings.

In the parish books I find this memorandum :

"Aug. ye 21, 1733, Agreed then at a general Towne Meeting, holden in ye parish Church of Theberton (public notice being first given thereof in ye said Church on ye Sunday foregoing) that Thomas Pask, Housholder in ye said parish, shall

succeed John Turner deceased in ye office of parish clerk and sexton, till cause be shewed and reason given to the contrary, and that he the said Thomas Pask shall have and receive ye usual ffees belonging to the said office according to ye custom of ye said parish, and further yt he the said Thomas shall be paid twenty shillings per annum by ye church-warden of ye parish aforesaid for ye time being.

Witness our hands the day and year above written,

R. Hacon, Rector.
John Foulsom, Church-warden.
Richard Blomfeild, Overseer."

Mr. Hacon always added after his signature a very complicated monogram.

Poor Pask, or Pasque, got later into low water, and had to accept aid from the parish.

In 1735, £22. 9*s*. 5*d*. was laid out for new lead for the roof of the aisle ; and a year after we have it that the south side of the porch was "new cast."

Phaba Booth was married in 1735, and Mr. Hacon charged the parish 18*s*. for tying the knot. Neither his infliction of the penance, nor his taking a fee, even from the parish, for marrying the poor girl, inclines one to credit this cleric with the grace of charity.

Hacon did not enjoy his living long. Upon his death, Benjamin Taylor was, in 1737, instituted to Theberton Rectory, and at the same time to the vicarage of Darsham.

A family of the name of Hacon, maybe the parson's relations, were settled in our neighbourhood: a James Hacon in 1760, Thomas in 1764, Philip in 1766, John in 1798, Susan in 1803, are registered as having been

buried at Theberton. In Middleton were buried an Elizabeth Hacon in 1766, a Thomas Hacon innholder in 1768, a William Hacon farmer in 1774, and in 1775 no less than five Hacons who died probably during an outbreak of smallpox.

In 1738 Charles Long, Esquire, of Hurts Hall signed an act for removing a pauper out of our parish.

"Paid for varman" is still quite a common entry. A certain Danbrook, an apparitor, seems to have trapped animal as well as human vermin. In 1739, his bag was one fox, seven polecats, one weasel. Polecats have not survived modern game preserving, and foxes are nearly extinct now in this district of Suffolk.

In 1740, the overseers journeyed twice to Justice Purvis for an order to remove a pauper. The Purvis family sold their Darsham estate in my recollection.

Justices in old times had more personal power than our modern magistrates; for instance a single justice could, on his own view, fine any person for using profane oaths, or being drunk in an alehouse, and commit him to gaol in default of payment, or order him to be put in the stocks; and could impose fines on persons not attending their parish church, or attending a bull baiting. Much of the comfort of a neighbourhood depended on his personal disposition. An ignorant tyrannical Justice would have been a curse to any parish; while, on the other hand, such a parish king as Blackstone tells of "maintaining good order by punishing the dissolute and the idle, protecting the peaceable and industrious, and above all, healing petty differences and preventing vexatious prosecutions," would have been a blessing to a village.

The rector, as chairman by right of the Easter vestry of 1741, signed a minute that persons "convected" of

wood stealing, or fowl stealing, or any other act of theft whatsoever should be prosecuted at the cost of the town.

That year, the churchwardens gave 2*d.* each "to six men who had been taken by the Spainyards," and the next year 1*s.* "to ten men that had been taken by ye Turks." Plausible liars it is likely every one of them.

A poor girl, in 1742 had a gown, two shifts, an apron, and a pair of pattens provided for her. A village damsel of to-day would turn up her nose at pattens. This probably was her outfit for service. A paper in the parish chest shows how such a girl could be relieved from service, by order of a magistrate:

To be remembered December ye 16 1734. John Fulsham of Theberton master, and Priscilla Kit servant, came before me desiring they might be discharged from each other. The master complained she was not fit for his service. I allowed of ye cause and do discharge ye said Priscilla Kitt from his said service

Robert Jenney.

Another poor girl was provided with a "stumitcher."

In 1743, "blocks" were carted by the parish from Tyler's Green, this was billet wood for firing; also loads of whin (furze), heath and broom were provided for poor people. A yearly gift likewise was "flags." In 1744, for example, twenty loads of "flaggs" were carted for the poor. For these, groundage 6*d.* per load was paid—I take it to the lord of the manor. The flags were surface parings from the heath, such as are set out for commoners now, in the New Forest. We find that a "flagg shodd" was built by the parish.

Turf also was distributed. This year we have:—

	£	s.	d.
To John Chapman for cutting twenty loads of Turf	1	10	
Turning the turf		3	
Carrying the turf 1½ days to the poor		12	
Landing the turf one day's work		1	6

No groundage seems to have been paid for turf. The

turf or peat was "graved" (dug) as from Irish bogs; a plantation upon the Lower Abbey farm is now known as Tuffpits, an evident corruption—according with Suffolk pronunciation—of turf pits. Both flags and turf came from the commons of heather and fen, then managed by fen reeves for our parish.

In 1745, 6*s.* 4*d.* was laid out "for stoping the burds out of the church"—perhaps sparrows, not doves, this time. Sparrows had become a nuisance—they make havoc of thatch—and the thatched roof of the church had no doubt suffered. In three successive years, sixty-six dozen, fifty-four dozen, and eighty dozen, of the mischievous birds were paid for by the church-wardens.

On Coldfair Green, a fair under a franchise of the abbots of Leiston used to be held in cold weather, whence the place name; and that business was done there in the 18th century, is shown by this entry in the overseers' bill for 1748:—"Laid out at Colfayer for Hubbard and the girl Turner 5*s.* 8*d.*" On the Grange farm in Theberton, is a field called the market field, scene probably of the ancient market held under a grant of 1312 to the Abbey.

Among receipts for 1748, is "rent of Winter's Heath £1. 19*s.*, and for timber sold £1. 15*s.*" That year John Puttock or Putthawke (buzzard) was churchwarden; another Theberton name was Sparhawke or Sparrahawke.

Beneath the Communion Table in our church is a flat stone inscribed:—

The Revnd. Benjamin Taylor
Rector of this parish
died June 19 1748
aged 54 years
On the North side
The remains of Elizabeth
his wife died Jan. 9
1747 aged 43
Also of his mother
Aged 8——.

To Benjamin Taylor succeeded James Benet, M.A., instituted to Theberton in 1748, and at the same time to the living of Aldborough.

"To gathering herbs, and a lb. raisons for Edney's child" was an item of charge in 1749; sad to say, the herbs and raisins failed of success; the next entries are: "to a pint of brandy and winding for ye child 2*s.* 0¾*d.*," "for laying her forth and cakes 2*s.*" and "to Pask for burying ye child."

There is a reference, that year, to Yew-tree house. A hundred years later, this cottage was burned down; I remember being taken as a small child to see the spectacle of its burning.

CHAPTER XIV

THE manor book of Theberton has this entry: "This book was thus far transcribed from the old book in the year 1750, being same year that John Ingham gent purchased this manor and the estate thereto belonging, of William Bradley Esqre."

John Ingham held his first court in 1751.

This entry for 1752 reminds us of the improvement effected by the alteration of the calendar—"N.S. (new style) year begins 1 Jan." The words of the Act by which the alteration was made read quaintly now. After reciting "that the legal supputation of the year . . . according to which the year beginneth on the 25 day of March, had been found by experience to be attended with divers inconveniences, it was enacted that the said supputation should not be made use of from and after the last day of December 1751, and that from thenceforth the first day of January every year should be reckoned the first day of the year." One can now hardly realise that the year used to begin on March 25, so that New Year's Day and Lady Day were the same.

At the Easter meeting in 1753, it was agreed that Elizabeth the daughter of William Newson should be "cloathed with a pair of shoes, a shift, a jacket, and a

petty coat." Happily for Elizabeth summer was coming on.

An odd minute occurs in the minute book for 13 November of that year 1753:

> "It was agreed that James Goleby the overseer, provide a place to dip Ann Clark in order to recover her of her lameness; and that he provide her with such necessaries as are needfull during the time of diping; and that he give an account of the success thereof to the Parishioners as soon as occasion require."

I suppose that occasion did not require, for there is no account of the success or non-success of the "diping."

In August 1754, it was agreed that an "article" (presumably a lease) be made to Henry Newson the elder and Henry Newson the younger, for Tyler's Green, and Winter's Heath with the green near thereto—which was, I think, known as the Little Green—for nine years from Michaelmas then next at a rent of £3 a year. And in the following December, "that a load of top wood be cut on Tyler's Green for the widow Randal."

As to the Common Fen, fen reeves were elected each year to manage it, just as were other parish officers. Here is a minute of April 21st, 1755: Agreed "that notice be given on Sunday next for the commoners to turn (their cattle) into the Common Fenn at eight o'clock on Monday morning next . . . the poor to be allowed flaggs as last year." Again 1757, "that we turn into the common ffen the 30th instant."

One other entry from the minute book is too characteristic to be omitted. Observe how we in Suffolk conjugate our verbs, and the vestry-like turn of thought and expression. . . . "The said overseer also inform the

said Parishioners that Robert Lion labourer have made complaint for relief; but we, being sensible that he and his wife have had their health as well as any of the Poor, and that he have not lost a days work by illness for a year past, and his wages being equal with other labourers, and that his wife has no other illness than her lying in which is no otherwise than common, . . . and that we do adjudge it neither charity nor reasonable to allow him anything."

That it is the custom of Theberton, for the parish—not the rector—to appoint the clerk and sexton, is proved by the election already mentioned of Thomas Pask in 1733, and by this minute of the town meeting held at Easter, 1754: "Thomas Pask was appointed sexton and clark for this parish in the room of his father late deceased until further order of the parish"—signed by three principal parishioners.

That year, a "dog wipe" was purchased at the price of 4*d.*, perhaps for Thomas Pask to use, or possibly the duty of whipping stray dogs out of the church may have been put upon the "parriter."

A new rector again in 1756, when John Whittington, A.M., was instituted to the rectory of Theberton upon the death of James Benet, and contemporaneously to the cures of Sudbourn and Orford.

These were the halcyon days of clerical apathy and do-nothingness, when, moreover, clergymen were either pluralists or very poor. This pluralist rector evidently lived elsewhere; and his curate at Theberton had to make both ends meet, on a pittance which could not enable him to appear like a gentleman, or to afford charity to the poor and needy.

Once maybe, there had been some excuse for the bad system of pluralities. In the fifteen hundreds there

was a sad scarcity of clergy. In 1560, the Bishop of London was driven to ordain "artificers," until forbidden by the Archbishop "as those persons had not behaved themselves to the credit of the Gospel"; and thirty years later, Convocation advocated the system, on the ground that out of 8800 and more benefices, there were not 600 which were sufficient for learned men, and that were they all sufficient, not a third of that number of men could be found to supply them.

But it worked wrong and injustice. The land of each parish was subject to a heavy charge for tithe. In the case of a rectory the entire tithe, or of a vicarage such portion of the tithe as former robbery had left, was due to provide a resident incumbent. Could it be right for that provision to be diverted into the pocket of some unsympathetic stranger whose only interest in the parish was the income he drew from it, which he would spend elsewhere.

The system happily has been put an end to. It was as immoral, dishonest, and harmful to the interests of religion, as the old conventual appropriations.

On the brown paper lining to the back cover of the volume of registers from 1748 to 1782, the following strange lines have been written. The ink is much faded and some words have been inked over with blacker ink.[1]

"Theberton"
viz.

"Hic quondam vixit curatus quidam pa[uper] q[ui] per certos annos (propterea quod Evangelium predicavit, ad quod cõmissus est a Steph[ano] Weston [Exoniense] episc[opo] apud S^ti^. Michaelis 1734 & 1736) neque jent[aculum] nec prandium nec cænam, nisi suis impensis per totam parochiam comedit

Orthodoxus

[1] Davy has a version of it, copied, he says, "from a paper *inter cartas* Revd. G. Doughty 1810." The words or letters in square brackets [ ] are supplied from Davy's version.

Vah (Davy has Vale) Œvum
Quæris an Jussus? Ουδε Τευ Non equidem N.B. Quorum per spatium duorum Rectoream inhabitavit domum Pauperum o Finistrarum census haud parvos taxatus minas præterea quinque atque solidos totidem pro inhabita[tione] reddens per annum Cui stipendium ibi minæ 20 haud decimæ decimarum."

I find that "John Taylor curate" signed our register for 1760, so he was probably the Rev. Mr. Taylor who Davy says wrote this in 1762. We learn, by the way, from "Orthodoxus" that the benefice of Theberton was worth more than £200 a year in the time of his curacy.

Our parish constable must have wielded a gorgeous staff. In 1758, 7*s.* was laid out for adorning it.

Funerals were quite festive occasions; in a bill of Thos. Watling a charge is made for "5 gallons of beer at Ann Hollis' burial." Poor Ann, in her lifetime, had caused expense to the parish:—

	s.	*d.*
"For things Bout for Ann Holey		
to cloth For Five shiffings	5	0
to a par of stocksons	2	
to the Dockters Bleeden of har . .		6"

Payment is acknowledged: "Receved the Hool Contents of This Bill By me

John Willson."

In 1759, a medical man named Manning practised at Middleton, and attended poor folk in our parish. In the parish chest is a "Theberton town bill" of his, "for looking after John Hurrard."

	s.	*d.*
To a bleeding and a blister for his neck	1	0
Journey and a half pint mixture against convulsions	3	0
Box of nervous pills	1	6

	s.	*d.*
Glass of cordial drops		6
A journey and a vomit	1	6
Bleeding him twice		6
A small glass of smelling drops for his wife		4

Poor "goodmen" and "goodies" could not allow time for the treatment of those best of physicians, Dr. Diet, Dr. Quiet, and Dr. Merriman; and parish practitioners, one suspects, inclined to follow the practice of that medical eccentric, Dr. I. Lettsom:—

> "When patients come to I,
> I physicks bleeds and sweats 'em,
> Then if they choose to die,
> What's that to I,
> I Letts 'em."

The rental of the parish was assessed at £889 in 1763. That year, either the lead roof of the aisle, or else the church windows, or both, needed repair; for £20. 14*s.* 11½*d.* was paid to a plumber—Threedkin Cable by name—with 13*s.* 5*d.* for board, and 8*s.* 9*d.* for beer. The carpenter's work cost £2. 18*s.* 11*d.*; and Mr. Foulsham got "a mattros for his seat," paid for out of the rates.

The "clarjiman's" dinners at the "Generals" each year were always paid for—from 2*s.* to 3*s.*

In 1766, the "dog wipe" had perhaps worn out, and other means became needful to keep curs from consecrated places; we find a bill for communion rails £7. 9*s.* 8*d.* The ancient rails had probably been pulled down and destroyed during Puritan times. Those now supplied were, probably, the same balusters I can remember, set quite close together so that the dogs could not get through to the Holy Table. The rector contributed a part of the cost—"Received from

Mr. Whittington towards communion rails last year, £2. 2*s.*," is an entry for 1767.

The parish realised £3. 6*s.* 8*d.* by sale of trees on Tyler's Green.

An outlay we find made with pious regularity is "repairing the tombs"—a lesson for after generations.

Repairs were constantly needed in the church and churchyard. In 1767, £10. 5*s.* 6*d.* was expended, part of it for whitening the church. In 1769 again, the churchyard had to be re-paled, with wood brought from Yoxford, costing £6. 3*s.* 11*d.* In 1772, "bricklayers, mending end of church" earned £10. 5*s.* 4*d.*; and Thomas and Robert Bailey—whose descendants still live in the same house and are still the parish blacksmiths, had £1. 3*s.* 6*d.* for mending the bells. Next year, thatching came to £12. 9*s.* 10*d.*

In those days, good in that respect, such charges levied by a legal rate, fell equitably upon all. Now, when asked for a voluntary rate. "No!" grumbles Mr. So-and-so, "Mr. Somebody else won't pay, why should I?"

During the last half of the eighteenth century, not only the name of Bailey, but many other names now familiar in this and the adjacent parishes, appear upon the register, *e.g.*, Rouse, Lumpkin, Ford, Todd, Canham, Brown, Block, Free, Gilbert, Mayhew, Marjoram, Shepherd, King, Paul, Legget, Folkard. Naturally some have dropped out—Ide, Alp, and Goose, among others.

In 1754, Mr. John Ingham had a "survey or particular" made and written in a book, of his manor and estate of Theberton Hall. The book refers to a "mapp" drawn on parchment now sadly mutilated. In the margin is a rough coloured drawing of "the east prospect of

Theberton Hall" ; it represents a small Tudor house of E shape, in appearance much like a house of about the same period, now a farm house, the present Leiston Hall.

I think Mr. Ingham must have altered the house ; for into the fly-leaf of his book of survey, under an emblazonment of his arms, I find pasted another rough sketch on paper, which shows a house apparently the same building, only both the gables and the attic windows are hidden by a parapet, and the red brick is painted white. A porch looking like a front door appears in both drawings; but as the parchment drawing is entitled "east prospect," and as the front of the old Hall, in fact, looked down the avenue[1] towards the south, it must be, if both the drawings represent the same house, that either it had two fronts, east and south, and two front doors, or that the legend "east prospect" is wrong. I think the last alternative is probable, for to the artist on parchment no error is too bad to be attributed; he gives us a sketch also of the church, obviously from a tracing, but he must have used the back of the tracing for his copy, with the result that the tower appears at the east end, and the whole picture is reversed.

The several farms are described by the survey in detail. First, comes the Pike Hill now the Peak Hill farm. The house and four acres of land then abutted on "the park gates" towards the east; which is of interest, as the western boundary of the ancient park of Theberton is thus indicated. The strange place-name, "Bear Way," is referred to; and, as the boundary between the parishes of Theberton and Kelsale also divides the Hundreds of Blything and Hoxne, the line

[1] Not many of the old elms are left. They used to be crowded with rooks' nests.

of division was described as the Hundred Mere. The watercourse below the Peak Hill cottages, was called the Marfard brook, a name now forgotten.

Next, Theberton Hall farm.—It consisted of "the capital messuage of Theberton Hall," with outbuildings and "188a. 3r. 1p. of land and marsh, being the demesnes of the manor of Theberton"; which "lands were all, or the greater part of them, an enclosed park, and are all freehold; and 77a. 0r. 37p, part thereof, and which was formerly part of the said park, are tythe ffree, paying only a yearly modus of ten shillings to the rector of Theberton in lieu of all tythes." This farm was then let at £80 per annum, which, as the surveyor remarked, was only eight shillings and sixpence per acre.

It would thus seem that in 1754 the Hall was occupied as a farm house, and that part of the ancient park went with it as a farm under tillage.

Where, and what, was the house we have read of called Park House? At one time, I thought that it was the "mansion with the brickell"; but further research has led to another conclusion. What I have satisfied myself of, is that the Hall was sometimes called the Park House, and that these were merely two names for the same house. We have already seen that Sir Arthur Jenney, by his will of 1668, devised with the manor of Theberton, the mansion he called the Park House; and that at the date of a settlement some eighteen years later, Edmund Jenney was seised in fee of the manor, with the capital messuage called Theberton Hall. Both will and settlement were plainly intended to pass all that testator and settlor had to dispose of. Neither purports to deal with more than one mansion or capital messuage, which each mentions in connection with the manor.

In 1750, it is clear from the careful description of the

manor and estate in the survey, that there was then only one mansion or capital messuage—which at that time was called the Hall.

It will be remembered also, that in 1672, Richard Hall, lord pro tempore of the manor, was assessed for the "Park House farm"; and that in 1750, John Ingham bought the "Theberton Hall farm." That these two names referred to one and the same farm, I am convinced. Some of the Jenney family may have preferred the name "Park House," as commemorating the old deer park, to the more ancient name of the "immemorial seat of the manor"—the Hall.

It is a strange thing, that the "mansion with the brickell" has vanished from sight and even tradition; not a trace of it can be discovered, unless some pits and trenches in Kiln Grove—from which it is more likely that clay for the brick kiln was digged out—may in fact indicate its foundations.

The Church farm consisted of a messuage, a malting office, two barns, stables, and a "potash office," with ninety-one acres and thirty-one perches of land. The malting office stood on the green between the farm house and the high road. What the use was of a "potash office" I am not sure; but the name recalls an old industry. More than a century before, a patent had been granted for a then new method of making saltpetre. All persons were required to save liquid material, which in these cleaner days we are too glad to get rid of, for the use of the patentees. The patentees too, were, till prohibited by Act of Parliament in 1656, empowered to mine under other folk's dove houses, stables, and cattle sheds, for soil saturated with precious filth; and to this sweet compost, wood ashes were applied in order to produce potash. Whether this "potash office" was still a

receptacle for wood ashes, or whether the manufacture of saltpetre had been carried on there, I do not know—nor indeed do I think it worth knowing.

The cottages now called the Ivy Cottages, were "letten with this farm"; they were then in two tenements, and in that farthest from the church, there was a grocer's shop. The run of water from the Wash Cottage was then called the Beli or Belis brook. For the farm and the cottages the rent was £80.

The Common farm, it is stated, was so-called because it bordered on Theberton Common. Since being used as a home farm by my great grandfather, it has been known as the Hall farm. There was a messuage or farm house—the same no doubt as stands there now, a bake house, a stable, and four small barns. From a marginal note, we learn that one barn was taken down in 1756, and two others in 1767 when a large barn was built. The cottage called the Yew Tree house—which has been before referred to—went with the farm. There were of land and marsh, 135a. 1r.

A piece of glebe belonging to the rectory of Theberton, containing 1 rood and 20 perches, lay in a field, not now to be identified, belonging to this farm; it was then marked "with posts or dooles." The tenant of the farm was John Foulsham, and the rent £80.

The survey tells us how many "topp oaks" each enclosure contained: on Pike Hill farm were forty-three in all—eleven of which stood close about the Ivy cottage at the Peak Hill; the other two cottages had not then been built.

On Theberton Hall farm, were four hundred and ten "topp oaks"—two hundred and thirty-seven upon the site of the Great Wood, seventy-three in the Kiln Grove and the small meadow north of it, and twenty-nine in

an enclosure which the imperfect map does not enable me to identify.

On the Church farm, and on the Common farm, were thirty, and sixteen "topp oaks" respectively. The Whin Covert does not seem to have been planted; the site probably was then over-grown with whin; for a few years ago a crop of seedling whin came up in spring upon bare spots where woodmen's fires had been. How long must the seeds lying in the ground have retained their vitality!

The survey book sets out the then existing customs of tithing, which had hardly altered since 1674. They were:

For a milch cow, in lieu of milk	2*d.*
For every calf, lamb, pig, and goose, above the number of ten, and under seven	2*d.*
For every acre of meadow, being mowed in lieu of hay	4*d.*
For every acre of pasture, being mowed	2*d.*
For every gast beast and budd[1] pastured there	1*d.*
For the fall of every colt	1*d.*

All other tithes were payable in kind.

Part of the land being situate in Kelsale, the customs of tithing for that parish are set out too. Items perhaps worth noticing are:

For fruit	4*d.*
An hearth hen, in lieu of wood as well sold as burnt	
Tyth eggs on Good Friday, in lieu of chickens ducks and turkeys	
For a peck of hempseed sowing	1*d.*

And, among tithes in kind are hops, which have long ceased to be cultivated in this part of Suffolk.

The rector of Kelsale, fortunate man, was also entitled to "offerings at Easter and to Mortuaries according to law."

[1] A young bullock about a year old.

The survey book supplies details of all the various purchases, which that acquisitive race the Inghams had made between 1615 and 1720. They number thirty-five, lying in Theberton or just over the parish boundary —small plots mostly, of from half an acre to two or three acres, on some of which stood cottages. Most of these must have been old cottages dating from before the time of Elizabeth ; for, under an Act of her reign until it was repealed in 1775, no new cottage could have been built with less than four acres of ground, and few of these had as much. There had been many petty land-owners, and these purchases are examples of how inevitably, small properties gravitate to, and are absorbed by greater.

From cottage to cottage, from small holding to small holding, the country was, in days of old, intersected by many *communes viæ* most of which, in the course of time, have been done away with. One of such ways led from the rectory towards Stone Hill ; its course being from the high road just north of what is now the garden plantation, past the Common farmhouse ; and on this way some of the holdings abutted. Years ago I found in the garden plantation, an ancient well, lined with rubble, which no doubt appertained to one of the cottages described as "since wasted," or "since taken down." Most of the crofts and tofts, as held by John Ingham of the manor of Theberton, became, when he bought the manor in 1750, *ipso-facto* freehold. Some however, holden by copy of other manors, retained their copyhold status. One of these—a cottage with six acres and a few perches of land was holden of Leiston manor, "by service, and three and sevenpence ; with twenty pence thereof and six days work in harvest to be paid in money"—interesting as showing the ancient

villein tenure, and how, in later times, the old services had been commuted.

One last quotation from the survey book, of words copied therein from an earlier source: "The lords have always had a right to a royalty and of taking game extending over the whole parish of Theberton." This need not arouse alarm among my neighbours.

In the year 1764–5 and for many years afterwards, one John Thompson was churchwarden of Theberton. It seems he was tenant of the Church farm; for on the inner side of a window in the farm house is scratched with a diamond:

> "John Thompson
> Mary Thompson
> Came to Theberton Oct: 1764."

On the outer side of another window pane are scratched these lines of doggerel:

> "O that I was war I would be
> Then should I be ware
> But ware I am theare must I be
> Because weare I came . . . . ."

The rest of the last line is covered by the lead in which the pane is set, and the charm of the poetry has not tempted me to uncover it.

In 1764, the existing system of poor relief was inaugurated in our district; by the incorporation of all the parishes within the Hundred of Blything, except Dunwich, for the maintenance of the poor in a House of Industry at Bulcamp. At the first meeting at Halesworth of the Directors and Guardians, Mr. John Ingham attended as an acting guardian. The House was not opened till the autumn of 1766, when fifty-six paupers were admitted.

A cause of the delay had been, that the partly built

house and the collected building material, had been greatly damaged by a riotous mob. The old Ipswich Journal, in its number of 10th of August 1765, inserted this extract from a letter of a Halesworth correspondent dated the previous day:

"You may depend upon the truth of the following account of what happened in our neighbourhood last Monday. About 5 o'clock in the evening, the rioters to the no. of about 200, went through this town to Bulcamp, where the workhouse was building, about 5 miles from hence. A few of them mounted the works, and climbed to the top of the poles of the scaffold, waved their hats and huzza'd: In about ½ hour there was a much greater number of people and by 9 o'clock at night the whole building was levelled to the ground. The joists of the chamber floor were laid, and the whole damage is computed at £2000. After doing this mischief they went to Sir John Rous' house at Henham, where upon their demand for refreshment they had plenty of beer and victuals given them; from hence they went to Geo. Goldings Esqre. at Thorington, who was not at home, but they called up the steward who was obliged to give them what provision the house afforded. They went off very quietly from thence to the Rev. Mr. Buxton's at Darsham, so through Yoxford to John Scrivener's Esqre. at Sibton, and demanded further refreshment, and then returned to Yoxford, and desired to speak with Mr. Ingham of that place, who was not at home. They began to pull down his house, but were prevailed on by some people present to desist—What these rash people will attempt further time will discover."

We cannot acquit Theberton of participation in this riot. The next weekly number of the Journal has this further information.

> "Yesterday Dan: Manning and Benjamin Preston of Theberton labourers, and James Strowger of Westleton carter, were brought to our gaol by a small party of light horse, charged with having been feloniously concerned in pulling down a building at Bulcamp called a House for the Poor. The excuse offered by the mob was that the poor should have been allowed to work in the fields. The soldiers had been obliged to use force in quelling the riot and one man was killed."

No mention of the House occurs in our parish papers till 1781, when we find a receipt by the Treasurer for a quarter's assessment £16. 12*s*. 9½*d*. from the parish of Theberton.

The register for 1769 records the baptisms of six children of John and Martha Lord. This note must surely have been written by an Irishman: "These six children were born quakers and christened afterwards"!

In 1771, on the death of John Whittington, a second James Benet became rector of Theberton: he was also vicar of Aldborough, and for four years rector of Dennington. He seems to have kept house at Aldborough, and there he was buried.

CHAPTER XV

In 1775, John Ingham made his will, directing his executor Richard Crowfoot to sell his property at Theberton; and in 1776, the testator having died, Mr. Crowfoot sold the estate and the manor to George Doughty Esquire.

The purchaser pulled down the ancient Hall, and nearly on the site of it, built the oldest part of the present house, with very hard white bricks made upon the estate. He was one of the earliest officers of the Loyal Suffolk Yeomanry. We have a jug of earthenware, which must have once belonged to the Yeomanry mess. Pictured on it is a Yeoman in the old uniform, holding his sword at the carry, with the legends:

"Loyal Suffolk Yeomanry," and "God save the King," and at the back, the names:

Sir John Rous,	Captain.
Lieut: Geo: Doughty,	Esquires.
Cornet, John Clayton,	

I think Mr. Doughty resigned his commission in 1793 at the time he became High Sheriff. When I was a small boy, an old man one Bridges of Middleton told me he had served as one of his javelin men, and described him

as "a fine gentleman on a black horse." We have a good pastel picture of him in the shooting dress of the period, just about to shoot a woodcock put up by a spaniel.

He had perhaps bought the spaniel from a neighbour, the Rev. Barnabas Symonds, who had a school at Kelsale, after 1758 was rector of Thorington, and who was famous for his kennel of sporting dogs. Symonds was the author of "The Suffolk Sportsman," which went to a third edition. The quaint little treatise purports to show "the nature of the various kinds of dogs in use for gun and net, with the most rational method of training and breaking them . . . also other matters of great nicety and utility in the sporting way."

Perhaps, the most interesting of the contents are scattered references to the old sport of setting partridges, which in Mr. Symonds' time, and for years afterwards, was a common and daily rural diversion. Not more than seventy years have passed, since on any day after harvest, sportsmen with nets over their arms and setting dogs at heel, might have been seen about our fields in Theberton; and it is strange and surprising, how in so short a time, the sport can have been absolutely forgotten.

The book opens with a dissertation on setting dogs. To the setter it was, that our forbears were indebted for what Symonds thought "the neatest and genteelest diversion of the field," which moreover, could be "pursued with that easy and polite attention unknown to votaries of the severer exercises."

Setting, our writer tells us, is of ancient extraction. He dates it back at least as far as Solomon:—"Surely in vain the net is spread in sight of any bird." And even at that remote time, it must have been, he points out, not a new, but a "usual practice that every one

GEORGE DOUGHTY ESQUIRE, BORN 1739, DIED 1798.
From a Pastel picture.

was well acquainted with, and might receive an instructive lesson and admonition from." It may indeed, have helped to amuse the poor sage's seven hundred wives, for among its advantages, our sporting parson claims that it has "*this singular pride* that it can entertain" ladies.

He had—sly old parson—"known a sporting female spread a net *not in vain* . . . . No noise was to be made, yet not such peremptory silence was enjoined, but that soft things might be said tête-à-tête."

Solomon and his menagerie we may leave with Mr. Symonds. The history of setting in Christian England goes quite far enough back for us. To begin only at James I.'s accession—we might begin centuries earlier:—In 1604, by an Act of Parliament, which dealt with "those vulgar sort of men who make a living by breaking the laws in regard to the taking of game by means of . . . . nets, ... and other instruments," it was provided that persons with £10 per annum freehold, or £200 personalty, might take "pheasants and partridges in the day time with nets" on their own lands, "betwixt the Feaste of Sainte Michael the Archangel and the Feaste of the Birthe of our Lorde God."

Five years later, his verbose Majesty, in a speech of preposterous length to both Houses of Parliament, delivered himself thus:—"As for partridges and pheasants, I do not deny that gentlemen should have their sports, and specially on their own ground, but I do not think such games and pleasures should be free to the base people. And I could even wish that gentlemen should use it in a gentlemanlike fashion, and not with nets or guns." James, lover of hunting, the sport of kings, did not approve of such inferior pastimes as setting and shooting.

In Dutch King William's time, society was no longer, if it had ever been, of Scotch King James' opinion; at least if we may judge by what was popular upon the stage. "What is a gentleman?" was a question asked in a comedy written by George Powell, and acted at Dorset Gardens in 1694. "What is a gentleman without his recreations. . . . Hawks, hounds, and setting dogs, and cocks, are the true marks of country gentlemen."

Symonds naturally assumed that his readers would be familiar with the sport, and so does not describe how taking partridges with setting dogs was actually effected. An earlier book however, "The Gentleman's Recreations," aptly supplies the want. The article on the subject is short, and a pleasant antique flavour hangs about it.

"There is no art of taking partridges so excellent and pleasant as by the help of a Setting-Dog. You are to understand that a Setting Dog is a certain lusty Land Spaniel,[1] taught by nature to hunt the partridge more than any chace whatever, running the fields over with such alacrity and nimbleness as if there was no limit to his fury and desire; and yet by art under such excellent command, that in the very height of his career by a Hem! or sound of his master's voice, he shall stand, gaze about him, look in his master's face and observe his directions, whether to proceed, stand still, or retire. Nay, when he is even just upon his prey that he may even take it up in his mouth, yet his obedience is so framed by art, that presently he shall either stand still, or fall down flat on his belly, without daring either to make any noise or motion, till his master comes to him, and then he will proceed in all things to follow his directions. Having a dog thus

[1] In Symonds' opinion none had a just claim to the appellation but the English spaniel.

qualified by art and nature, take him with you where partridges do haunt ; there cast off your dog, and by some word of encouragement with which he is acquainted engage him to range, but never too far from you, and see that he beat his ground justly and even. . . . If in your dog's ranging, you perceive him to stop on the sudden or stand still, you must then make in to him (for without doubt he hath set the partridge), and as soon as you come to him, command him to go nearer him : but if he goes not, but either lies still, or stand shaking his tail as who would say here they are under my nose, and withal now and then looks back, then cease from urging him further, and take your circumference, walking fast, with a careless eye looking straight before the nose of the dog, and thereby see how the covey lie whether close or straggling. Then command the dog to lie still, draw forth your net, prick one end to the ground, and spread your net all open and so cover as many of the partridges as you can ; which done, make in with a noise, and spring up the partridges, which shall no sooner rise but they will be entangled in the net. And if you shall let go the old cock and hen, it will not only be an act like a gentleman, but a means to increase your pastime."

One can hardly look at the portrait of my great grandfather, his eye on the woodcock his gun ready to leap to his shoulder at the exact moment, without drawing comparisons between sport in his days and in ours. A great change has come even in my time, due mainly to changes in environing conditions. Stubbles are sheared off by reaping machines, and modern farming is intolerant of weedy fields and good cover. Birds which in his day would lie close, to be netted, will not

suffer approach within even the long range of modern weapons. Hence the necessity of driving partridges, and of resorting to driving early in the season. Shooters moreover are now vastly more numerous and more plutocratic, whence the rearing of enormous numbers of tame pheasants, and our monster battues. Our old sportsman and his friends enjoyed their quiet wood shooting over spaniels; but could they see our great hosts of beaters, our three guns each, and our loaders, our shooting stools, and our luncheons, our massacres of hand reared birds, what would they think of it? Mr. Symonds wrote:—"Gentlemen it must be presumed shoot for diversion and exercise, not for the sake of abundance of game, or the reputation of destroying it." Would that this were so now: yet, after all, in these decadent days of shoots rivalling shoots, and keepers competing with keepers for fame of slaughter, there are some good men left, who in their heart of hearts despise artificial caricatures of sport.

George Doughty was a man of worthy memory—trustee for many friends, guardian of their children. Among his early intimates was one whose name is connected with Theberton. Francis Light had founded the colony of Penang or Prince of Wales' Island, and become its first Governor; and loving his home land as all Suffolk men do, had given to a tract of ground, which has been described as "the most beautiful spot of the kind in India," the name of Suffolk.

Captain Light wrote to his friend from Prince of Wales' Island, under date 11 Sept. 1792:

"DEAR GEORGE—Trusting to the sincerity of our loving friendship, and your genuine goodness of heart, without waiting for permission, I have consigned one of

my children to your care and authority. . . . He is now six years of age. . . . I shall take care to send you supplies of cash as well for the boy's maintenance, as the purchase of Goldsberry Farm. Wall says it is so contiguous, that I have a longing desire to become the owner of it, so make sure of it, I shall then think of returning in good earnest. . . ."

Next year, another warm letter: "I have consigned my son William to your care." The writer further explained that he had not been able to send the money for the purchase of Goldsbury's farm, the expenses of his Governorship being twice the amount of his salary. "Dear George" he concluded "give ten thousand wishes to your wife, daughter and sisters, and tell them I am never so happy as when I am thinking of them. Adieu my dear friend, continue to plough your fields it is a thousand times preferable to governing." Captain Light died in 1794.

The farm house on "Goldsbury's Farm," afterwards known as the "Brick House," was the property of a Mr. Goldsbury, who later sold it to Mr. Wootton as we shall see.

William Light's youth was spent at Theberton Hall and at Martlesham Hall an estate of Mrs. Doughty, "a most amiable lady," who after her husband's death in 1798 acted as guardian of the boy. His after life was a romance.[1]

His career, like his father's before him, began in the navy, as a midshipman, in H.M. Frigate *Clyde*. He was taken prisoner by the French. Then, leaving the naval

[1] The lives of Francis and William Light are written in *The Founders of Penang and Adelaide*, by Mr. A. F. Steuart, a great-great-grandson of Francis, from which, by its author's kind permission, the few facts given here have been gathered.

service, he became a cornet in the 4th Light Dragoons, and served with high distinction throughout the Peninsular Campaign, as an *aide-de-camp* to Lord Wellesley, fighting in no less than forty-three actions without even a scratch. The war over, he published an account of his travels in France and Italy, illustrated from his own sketches by Peter de Wint. Later, a colonel in the Spanish constitutional army under General Sir Robert Wilson, he was severely wounded, and found himself stranded without means at Corunna, but "through the timely assistance of his old friend and guardian Mrs. Doughty," he was enabled to come home. He married in England, and having become a member of the Royal Yacht Club, cruised with his wife for some years about the Mediterranean, travelling much in southern Europe and in Egypt. On the establishment as a British Province of South Australia, Sir Charles Napier who had refused the Governorship, proposed that the appointment be offered to his friend Colonel Light. "I advise you," he wrote to the Colonial Secretary, "to try and get Colonel Light appointed Governor; whether he would accept it or not I cannot say, but his great accomplishments and his character being so generally known, not only for his distinguished services in the Peninsula under the Duke of Wellington, but also in Spain at the time Sir Robert Wilson was there, would give an *éclat* to the appointment, which might be useful to the colony, and at the same time secure an able man for the work."

But the office of Governor had been filled up, and Colonel Light was offered and accepted the appointment of Surveyor General. As an old sailor, he himself took command of the ship in which he and his staff sailed to Australia.

Having arrived in South Australia, he proceeded in the face of much opposition to select the site and to lay out the ground plan of the city of Adelaide. And there he died in 1838—founder, "father of Adelaide" as its grateful citizens have since styled him. Light Passage, Light County, and the River Light bear his name; and in Light Square, a statue of him has lately been placed to commemorate his services. At each election of a new mayor of Adelaide, takes place a picturesque ceremony. A silver loving cup filled with colonial wine is handed round, and "The Memory of Colonel Light" is solemnly toasted. Colonel Light deserves to be remembered in Theberton. A man he was of "extraordinary accomplishments, soldier, seaman, artist, and good in all,"[1] "a gentleman, a brave soldier, and a man of learning."[2] That he on his part never lost affection for his early home is quite certain. His house in Adelaide he christened "Thebarton," spelling the name after an old fashion, and a suburb of the Queen City of the South now bears the name of our little parish.

In the last quarter of the eighteenth, and in the early years of the nineteenth century, though the value of land was abnormally high, times were hard for labouring men. There were more hands than were needed, wages therefore were low, while at the same time wheat and other prime necessaries were exorbitantly high. The stress of poverty was great, and work had to be found somehow for the poor folk, if they were to be kept from the workhouse.

It then came to be remembered that the high road north of Theberton Rectory had two sharp bends in it

[1] *Life of Sir Charles Napier*, by Sir William Napier.
[2] Bulletin, July 16th, 1820, of General Sir Robert Wilson.

like the curves of the letter S, and that to straighten them would be a public advantage, and at the same time provide some much needed employment. The business was taken in hand accordingly; and, among our parish archives, we find a document dated 24th February 1769, under the hand and seal of George Doughty, whereby, in consideration of the old highway when stopped up and enclosed being vested in him and becoming his property, he consented to the making of a new highway through land of his (as shown in a plan annexed to the document); and to give the parish of Theberton as much land, as would suffice to make a new road twenty feet wide between the fences. This document was attested by one Robert Flamwell; and the alteration, having been approved by the Justices, was duly carried out.

The old road, of which the soil became Mr. Doughty's property, lay west of the present highway; its course was from the Rectory corner, over and along the strip of land now a plantation, between the Rectory lawn and the present road, on across the church walk, and making a sharp curve towards the west through the Hall park, it joined the line of the new road, near the north end of the garden plantation. The improvement effected was slight, but one may hope that it brought help to a few needy families.

At that time, Militia-men were balloted for, and wives of men serving had to be supported by their parish. Parishes sometimes bought substitutes; we read of £3, £9, £10, £12, £14, having been paid. I find a letter dated 1781, from the overseers of Bungay to the Theberton churchwardens and overseers, requesting the reimbursement of forty-two weeks' pay at 1*s.* 7½*d.* per week for Robert Farrow's family. The Theberton

people are reminded that "Farrow served as a substitute for a person balloted for by lot in your parish." Service in the Militia was unpopular; no less than £50 was paid by one farmer for exemption.

In 1795 and 1801, scarcity almost amounted to famine all over England. A remedy thought of, was to limit the consumption of wheat; and in some counties, magistrates summoned meetings of officers and principal inhabitants of parishes, to discuss the expediency of restricting the use of wheat flour. The times were bitterly hard for poor people. Prices of other necessaries besides wheat-flour had been forced up by taxation. The petition of Cobbett's labourers cannot be greatly overdrawn; they stated that more than half their wages was taken from them by taxes; that owing to taxes, they had to pay 6*d.* for a pot of worse beer than they could brew for a penny; that they paid ten shillings for a pair of shoes which would have cost but five shillings; sevenpence for a pound of soap or candles which would have been threepence; sevenpence for a pound of sugar they could have had for threepence; six shillings for a pound of tea which would have cost two shillings; and that the prices of both bread and meat had been doubled.

Many an aged labourer has said to me that young working people have no notion what their parents and grand-parents had to suffer. Perhaps, it may be that these survivors were the pick of their own generation; but this I know, that the old men I remember, born to self-denial and nurtured in hardness, strong, gentle and patient, have compelled my sincere respect—exemplars of an admirable strain of Englishmen. Cannot those of us who have known intimately Suffolk labourers of the old type, agree with him who wrote: "many times, wee see there lyeth more worth under a threadbare

cloake and within a thatched cottage, than the richest robe or the stateliest palace."

Lord Huntingfield has a rough map, or "Eye Sketch" as it styles itself, made about this same date which he kindly lent me. It shows, with other lands in Theberton the then farm of "Mr. Flemwell" who I think was the witness (R. Flamwell) to Mr. Doughty's signature.

The site is shown also of the house then called the Brick House, and occupied by "Mr. Goldsbury."[1] From opposite the end of the road continued from Potters Street, the way is shown from the highway to Tyler's Green; and on the west side of the same highway, opposite Fishpond Hill, stood a barn described "Mr. Peckover's," the earliest mention of land of that family that I have found in our parish records. Honour Lane is shown on the map. It is an ancient way but nine feet wide in many parts, winding, and deep below the level of the fields; there was then a gate across it, Flash Gate west of the corner now called Flash Corner. The marsh between the cottage now known as Frog Hall, and the road called Dark Trees, was then a part of Theberton Common; the land, as well now as at the date of the map called New England, had at an earlier period been known as Wrens Park and Hospital Lands, place names whose origin I cannot discover; and the lane from Flash Corner to Eastbridge then ran through a piece of open common.

During the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth centuries, the aspect of rural England underwent great changes. A prominent feature of the country had been its unenclosed wastes and commons. Now, the

[1] In the assessment of 1799, "Mr. Goldsbury" was set at £3. 6*s*. 5½*d*. per quarter. The only larger payer was "George Doughty Esquire," at £4. 17*s*. 8*d*. per quarter. "Mr. Pickover" was third, at £2. 3*s*. 9½*d*. per quarter.

high price of corn stimulated a rage for enclosing. Hundreds of thousands of acres were taken in, as well it was supposed, to the advantage of owners of land, as of the state; but whether justice was in general done to the peasantry is very open to question.

In Theberton and Leiston the commons were extensive—about four hundred and fifty acres; and the question of enclosure began to be agitated in those two parishes.

In 1791, we find that a meeting took place in Theberton, not of parishioners according to ancient custom, but of the copyhold tenants, whether of the manor of Theberton, or of that of Leiston, or of both the manors, does not appear. Those present purported to elect unanimously two men, Thomas Wigg and Henry Cabbald, to be fen reeves for the year then next ensuing. Never before, so far as our records tell us, had any such proceeding by copyhold tenants been attempted. Fen reeves for Theberton, had for time out of memory been appointed by town meetings of the parishioners. It certainly looks like a scheme, in contemplation of an enclosure, to oust the rights of parishioners, and to lay a foundation for claims by copyhold tenants.

The regular preliminaries were no doubt in due course complied with. A meeting of all persons interested in rights of commons had to be held; a majority of two-thirds, or of three-fourths in value, had to be obtained; and notice had to be affixed to the church door, that application would be made to Parliament for a private Act appointing commissioners to make the division. Such the preparatory nest building. In 1810, the egg was laid in the shape of a private Act of Parliament, "for enclosing lands within the parishes of Leiston and Theberton in the county of Suffolk," which is before me as I write.

The Preamble states among other things :

" That there were within the parishes of Leiston and Theberton, divers common fens and marshes and other commonable and waste lands"; those in Theberton being known as Theberton Bogs, Theberton Dry Common, Little Green, Stone Hill, Tylers Green, and part of the common called Wynters Heath (in all 156a. or. 21p.)

That Joshua Lord Huntingfield was lord of the manor of Leiston, and as such, claimed the soil of the said commonable and waste lands.

That Anne Doughty (widow of George Doughty who had died in 1798) was lady of the manor of Theberton, and as such, claimed the soil of such of the said commonable and waste lands as lay within the parish of Theberton.

That the said Joshua Lord Huntingfield, Anne Doughty, and divers other persons, owners of certain ancient commonable messuages and cottages, and tofts being the sites of ancient commonable messuages and cottages with the lands thereto belonging, claimed in respect thereof to be entitled to the whole depasturage and produce of the said common fens and marshes and other commonable and waste lands.

And, that the said commonable and waste lands in their then open and uncultivated state yielded very little profit, but if divided and allotted unto and amongst the several persons having rights of common thereon, might be inclosed cultivated and improved ; and that such division inclosure and improvement could not be effected without the aid of Parliament.

Of any claims on behalf of the parishioners of Theberton no mention is made in the Preamble.

TYLERS GREEN

From the Enclosure Award Map of 1824

Stanford's Geog.l Estab.t Lond.

London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd.

The great egg took no less than fourteen years to hatch. The duty of incubation was entrusted to three local commissioners who made their award in 1824.

The claim of Anne Doughty, in her capacity of the lady of the manor of Theberton, though it had been admitted as a claim by the Parliamentary committee, was silently ignored by the award.

If any claims were argued before the Commissioners for the parishioners of Theberton they are not recorded. Points of law were involved which only trained conveyancers would be competent to deal with; yet no counsel were members of this Commission. A solicitor was, it is true, a Commissioner, but the solicitor branch of the legal profession do not profess to be masters of abstruse law.

The points of law which may or might have been raised, for or against our poor folk are too technical to be discussed here; but a few words may perhaps be of interest. Our records set out in former pages, show that time out of memory the Theberton parishioners had enjoyed rights of common of pasture over the common and waste lands. Fen reeves had been elected every year by "town meetings" to regulate the exercise of those same rights—fixing the period for turning in the cattle and so forth. It will further have been noticed that the award itself treated the fen called "the Theberton Common Fen" though situate in another parish, as belonging to Theberton. All this goes to found a case on custom or prescription.

The lord of Leiston Manor may have relied upon documentary evidence. In the old complaint to the Star Chamber, the complainants claimed "common appendant." Strictly that would exclude claims as

parishioners, inasmuch as "common appendant" could only attach to lands of tenants of the manor."

For the parishioners, it may have been replied, that "appendant" might have been used by some careless draftsman, in mistake for "appurtenant"; and that "common appurtenant" might consist with their claims, as it is capable of attaching to lands outside of a manor.

It may have been pointed out against Theberton that the Chancery suit in Edward VI.'s time was instituted, not by parishioners, only by tenants of the soke of Leyston. But any objection that the parishioners had not been parties to the suit could have been disposed of I think without difficulty.

As to the two commons, Tylers Green and Winters Heath, it is indeed astonishing that no mention at all is made of them by the award. We have seen that the parish officers had exercised not mere rights of common, but actual ownership in both cases, granting leases, receiving rents, selling timber and underwood, without, so far as we can find, any trace of opposition by lords of the manor or any one whomsoever. An objection might possibly have been thought of; that parish officers, or a mere assemblage of individuals such as parishioners, not incorporated, were not capable to be landowners; but the point is so purely technical, that doubtless means would have been found to avoid doing injustice.

With respect to the turf digging, it must be admitted that the poor folk might have had a hard fight; the conclusion of law that a right of common of turbary, can only exist as appurtenant to a house in which the turf is burned, might have been difficult to get over.

Enough has now been said to show that our parish had claims at least good enough to argue, and as to

LITTLE GREEN AND WINTERS HEATH

From the Enclosure Award Map of 1824

London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd.

Stanford's Geog.l Estab.t London.

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some of them with reasonable chances of success. But we cannot get behind the award by any means. More's the pity! Common rights are not only a boon to labouring men but they are also of value to the community, tending to attach men born and bred on the land, skilful in all branches of a difficult craft, to their native parish.

CHAPTER XVI

WHETHER the labourers of that generation were sensible of any loss by the award, may be doubted ; work then was slack and wages low, and a long spell of employment on drainage and enclosure works must have been alluring. But when the works came to an end as they were bound to do some day, the position must have come home to them—common rights irrecoverably gone, and gone too their accustomed employment.

Clearly, the poor generally have lost by enclosures. Half a century after the Theberton enclosure, when moving for leave to bring in a General Inclosure Bill, the Earl of Lincoln said : "This I know, that in nineteen cases out of twenty, Committees of this House sitting on private enclosure bills, neglected the right of the poor. I do not say wilfully neglected their rights—far from it. But this I affirm, that they were neglected, because of the Committee being permitted to remain in ignorance of the claims of the poor man, because by means of his poverty, he is unable to come up to London to fee counsel, to produce witnesses, &c."

John Stuart Mill spoke of enclosures as "legalised spoliations."

Such legalised spoliations had come to be epidemic, but

from times long before, there had been sporadic cases; we have this story from James I.'s time.

The king riding through a certain village, noticed a fellow in the stocks, who, seeing the royal party, kept shouting Hosanna! His Majesty asked what it meant, and learned that he had been put in the stocks because he had stolen geese from off the common. "I beseech your Majesty," said the prisoner, "which is the greater thief, I for stealing the geese from the common, or his worship for stealing the common from the geese." King James, who loved a pleasant wit, exercised his royal prerogative—by not only releasing the man from the stocks, but by commanding that the common be restored to the poor people.[1]

As no rights of theirs had been admitted, there could be no compensation for our poor folk. We know, however, that some parishes, which had good friends perhaps to fight for them, were given fair compensation. In one case, the commissioners for enclosure were directed by a clause in their private Act, to set out land to be known as "the poor estate," to be vested in the lord of the manor (whose influence had procured the clause) the rector and the churchwardens and overseers, as trustees, to let it by auction, and apply the rents in providing fuel for the cottagers. For another parish, a clause in their Act gave to every cottager, without regard to common rights, half an acre of land. In other parishes again, recreation grounds were provided.

[1] In days of yore, and for long centuries, no village was without its "pair of stocks," and, in fact, after an Act of 1405 no town or village was permitted to dispense with them; yet I have found no note nor any trace of the repressive instrument in our parish. Perhaps the first pair rotted uselessly, and may we assume that in "happy Theberton" no need arose to replace them.

But enough of what the award did not do. What it did was:—First to set out new public roads over the lands enclosed. Such roads set out in Theberton were:

The road marked No. 1 in the map opposite "beginning at the South-West corner of Theberton Dry Common, and proceeding along the then present track in nearly a North-East direction over the said Dry Common, towards East Bridge."

Another road marked No. 2 in the same map "branching out of the last described Road opposite a Cottage then belonging to Zachariah Kett, and proceeding in nearly N.W. and W. directions over the said Dry Common, and the Common called the Bogs, passing over Tun-bridge (Town bridge) towards Theberton Church."

Another road marked No. 3 in the same map, "branching out of the last described Road at about the distance of one hundred and twenty yards East of the said Bridge called Tunbridge, and proceeding in nearly a South direction towards Potters Street."

Another road marked No 4 in the same map, "being the present Road leading from East Bridge over the Common called the Flash towards Theberton Church."

Another road marked No. 5 in the map facing page 210, "being the present Road leading over Tylers Green along the South Side thereof from Leiston Abbey to Saxmundham."

And one other road marked No. 6 in the last mentioned map, "branching out of the last described road and proceeding in nearly a North direction over Tylers Green to Theberton Church."

That part of road No. 1 which runs north and south

The
Map or Plan
of the
Commons, Common Fen Grounds and Waste Lands
within the Parish of
THEBERTON
and of the Common called
Theberton Common Fen
lying in the Parish of
LEISTON
in the County of
SUFFOLK.
As referred to by our Award
Wm Shuldham
Rt Crabtree
Jere Smith
(1824)

London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd.

Stanford's Geogl Estabt London

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has since been stopped, by what authority I do not know; it could not have been of much use to the public. Tylers Green had been a haunt of gipsies, whence no doubt the name Gipsy Lodge of now adjacent cottages.

The award then proceeded to make allotments. It would be tedious to particularise them here.

The only allotment made, with any colour of compensation to the parish, was the gravel pit at Eastbridge. This scrap of land, 2r. 6p. in extent, upon which the chapel has since been built, was given to the parish surveyor, for "the use and convenience of the proprietors of lands and estates within the parish . . . for the improvement of their lands and grounds"; it was also to serve "for the formation and repairs of roads belonging to the parish."

Thinking of this Theberton Enclosure, one cannot but be curious as to whom it benefited.

It may be admitted, that as enclosed and drained land is capable of carrying a greater head of stock than boggy unenclosed commons, the nation gained by an increase of food supply; but we, concerned only with our particular parish, would like to know whether any and which of our parishioners were the better.

The Act contemplated an allotment to the rector of Theberton in lieu of tithes. No allotment was made to him, with the result that all the lands enclosed became subject to tithe. The rector was thus a gainer. Who else was in that happy position? Of allottees of plots by virtue of land ownership one may take my ancestor as a fair sample. Before the award was promulgated, Mrs. Anne Doughty died, and to her son the Rev. George Clarke Doughty it was, that an allotment was in due course made. Well, how stands his account? On one side, let us credit him with the plots he acquired

—16a. 3r. 38p. in all. On the other side, debit him with his share of the costs and expenses. These came to £145. 12*s.* 6*d.* The result was that he had to pay for his allotment at the rate of £8. 10*s.* the acre; and this for land in the condition of wet bog, which—a portion of the Minsmere Level—was saddled with a further charge for embanking and draining, by another Act of Parliament.

Had not land been—in fact it was just then—at a quite abnormal value, the operation could not have advantaged him. As it was, I suspect that his allotment cost him quite as much as it was worth. And so no doubt with other allottees. The only persons, besides the rector, to whom clearly enclosure brought profit were professional men, who had no part or lot in Theberton —commissioners, surveyors, and lawyers. The three commissioners, during the fourteen years' incubation of their award, were paid three guineas each for every meeting; there were surveyors' fees; and the legal charges for procuring the private Act, drawing up the award, and much besides, were of necessity heavy.

Outsiders enjoyed the oyster; shells only were left for the persons entitled to allotments; not even shells, for either the lord of the Theberton manor in his capacity of lord, or for the parish and parishioners.

The other Act of Parliament above mentioned was a private Act of like date with the Enclosure Act: "For embanking and draining the level of marsh and fen land called Minsmere Level." This level included all the wet land in Theberton affected by the enclosure. The assessment made by the valuers—one of whom was also an enclosure commissioner—was delivered in 1813. The drainage scheme was no doubt a necessity; before the cuts—ditches—were made, men had to jump, I have

been told, from tussock to tussock, it was a veritable swamp.

A terrier of 1801 describes the Rectory, as it was during Mr. Wyatt's time: "one messuage with a back house adjoining under the same roof, built of timber and plastered, covered with thatch, in length sixty feet in breadth fourteen feet. A barn built of timber boarded and covered with a thatch, in length forty-five feet and in breadth eighteen feet. One stable and malt-house under one roof, built of timber, and partly clayed partly boarded, covered with thatch, in length twenty feet and in breadth thirteen feet." The Rectory lawn was then "one piece of land surrounding the aforesaid messuage and barn, situate between the lands of Anne Doughty late George Doughty Esq. on the part of the north, and the common way leading from Theberton towards Kelsale on the part to the south."

The terrier contains a list of the church plate: "one silver cup, one chalice weighing about nine ounces, one silver platter weighing about one ounce and a half, and one silver flagon." In 1706 there had been, according to that year's terrier, one flagon and that of pewter; in 1725 and 1729 one flagon described as of silver; in 1735 the flagon was said to be pewter, and in 1740 to be of silver one pound in weight.

One can never rely upon a terrier; sometimes they were just transcribed from their forerunners. In one, made in the eighteenth century, a book is entered under the name of "Jewish Apology"; an obviously careless mistake for "Jewell's Apologie"; the mistake is continued in several later terriers.

How the church looked about that time, the Davy MSS. tell us. In 1806, the pulpit stood under a sound-

board in the south-east angle of the nave. It was the same pulpit that we have now, made of oak in 1628, but it was then painted yellow. The communion table was encompassed with a rail and "banister." The church "was very irregularly seated and pewed with deal and oak." The floors were chiefly of white brick, except the raised part in front of the communion rails, which was of small square tiles formerly glazed black and yellow. The beautiful Romanesque north doorway is referred to as "a very handsome ornamental Saxon arch." This door was stopped up in 1826; and, since then, a vestry has been stuck on outside, and the fine mouldings of the arch coloured jaundice yellow. The roof, both of church and chancel were then unceiled. I think that at that time, there was a raised platform or so-called gallery, where the organ now stands, which was used by the singers and "musicianers," and that the various implements used in the church and churchyard were kept under it.

I find a bill of 1818 for "a new door to gallery," which probably was to shut in the space beneath the platform; and for the next year, a bill "self and lads matting up gallery," and "splines for hanging up hats in gallery"; and examples of other bills are, for 1818 again, "strings for viol"; for 1819, "candles for singers"; for 1824, "G. Garrod for one years singing bill"; and for another year, the same Garrod for "attending at the church for the purpose of singing," and "with the company of singers." So far back as 1813, there is a bill for making and fixing a shelf for use of psalm-singers.

The old metrical psalms were sung, of some the words noble, of others it might be almost grotesque, I think they were more often noble than grotesque.

There is a bill of 1815, for "psalms written," which, I

NORMAN DOOR, THEBERTON CHURCH.

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take it, means copies of scores for instruments as well as for voices. There were nine books written. John Pipe seems to have been leader and conductor. His book contained twelve tunes, besides an Easter hymn a Christmas hymn and an anthem; John Brown, Thomas Nunn, Thos. Pipe, A. Ayton, Wm. Smith, James Brown, Thomas Manning, and Wm. Brown had each a book, with from four to nine tunes in each.

Next year, two books less were charged for; John Pipe had but six tunes, and his son William Pipe now takes his place with the greatest number eight tunes, besides an Easter ode and an anthem.

William Pipe was then twenty-two years old. He became parish clerk in 1823 in succession to his father, and held the office till his death—a grand specimen he was of a parish clerk, of fine presence, with a musical voice, skilled in music and in bell ringing. He, like his father before him, carried on the trade of a shoemaker, and with many other avocations, was a farmer in a small way, hiring some scattered fields, doing most of the work himself, even his own harvest the last year of his life, at the age of eighty-nine. A tall, thin, active man, the best pedestrian in the district; I remember his telling me, how, having walked to Ipswich on business, and having intended to come back in the old Blue Coach, as far as Saxmundham, the coach overtook him soon after he had left Ipswich, but "No, thought he, he might as well walk on, and save the fare."

He did walk home. Even then he had attained middle age; his feet had carried him fifty-four miles, and the walk did not at all fatigue him he told me.

Upon his Jubilee, the completion of half a century in the clerkship, we presented him as a token of our respect, with a marble clock for his chimney-piece, an

inscription on it recording that for fifty years he had not once been absent from a church service; he was for sixty-nine years parish clerk, and died in 1892 at the age of ninety. These words are inscribed upon his gravestone: "This stone has been erected to his memory by his friends and fellow parishioners as a mark of respect for his worth."

Our old friend's grave is near his father's. On John Pipe's stone, it is inscribed that he died in 1823, having served as clerk and sexton more than twenty-five years. Thus, father and son together held the office of clerk in our parish nearly a century.

The music of the self-taught company of singers may not have been of the highest order, but it is worth considering that the musicians and their friends, with their and their friends' families, were led to take an interest in the services.

Now, churches in too many country villages are ceasing to be what they ought to be, churches of the people; the humbler classes do not feel at home in them; parsons treat congregations as merely passive buckets to be pumped into, and then wonder that they drift away into non-conformity. To chapel a welcome is given them, and they are encouraged to take an interest in chapel government. Some people seem to think our church exists only for well-to-do people; whereas, in truth, it is the birthright of all Englishmen; and all of us both small and great are entitled to a voice in its ordering. It is, moreover, the plain duty of its ministers to minister to all alike, in sacred things —to be neither "working men's parsons," nor, as a clergyman put it, "ecclesiastical butlers" of their richer parishioners.

Our own parish church, like many others, is all too large for our attenuated, steadily diminishing

congregations. East Anglia was once both populous and prosperous, and means were forthcoming in abundance for building great churches. Now, many of those churches stand almost empty; alms bags go round incessantly, but the yield is scanty, and the burden of maintenance on incumbents and impoverished landowners, is unduly heavy.

The register for 1803 records the burial of four young sailor men from a Danish West Indiaman, wrecked upon Sizewell beach; Hans Hansen, Christen Christensen, Olla Petersen, and Julius Lehus. No pious hand was found to place in God's acre any memorial to these poor seafarers.

It has, no doubt, surprised many persons that there are so few old gravestones in our Suffolk churchyards. In other parts one finds much older incised inscriptions; in the Scottish Highlands for example; but there they have imperishable slate; whereas we use a softer stone from which the lettering is soon weathered away.

I think the earliest gravestones in our own churchyard, on which inscriptions can be read, besides Fenn's "stone to sitt upon," are to the memory of: Ann wife of Charles Foulsham 1761, Thomas Broom 1770, Elizabeth Watling 1779, Thomas Watling 1780, Mary Wilson 1780, John Bidwell 1784, John Wilson 1785, John Robertson 1788, Ann Dickerson 1794 and Phillis Canham 1797. I put these on record as the inscriptions will soon have become illegible.

But indeed, gravestones anywhere are not very ancient. According to Weever "it was the use and custome of reverend antiquitie, to interre persons of the rusticke or plebeian sort in Christian buriall, without any further remembrance of them either by tombe, gravestone, or epitaph."

In 1805, the "Brick House," and some two hundred acres of land with sundry cottages, were put up and sold by auction, the purchaser being Mr. Thomas Whiting Wootton. Among the items referred to in the particulars, I find the "Mount, or Prospect House." The mount or mound remains, but the prospect or summer-house, which then stood upon it has disappeared. The origin of the little mound is unknown; but parish wiseacres "know it for sure" that from it Cromwell bombarded Leiston Abbey! The house was sold by Mr. Goldsbury as has been said, but had belonged to the Jesups, an old Theberton name.[1] It was quite a small place till about 1834, when Mr. Wootton built to it and made the present house, to which he gave the name Theberton House, and from two fields, Backhouse Field and Brick-kiln Piece or Brick-kiln Walk, he formed the present park. Another field was called "Honours," from the name perhaps of some old proprietor, after whom Honour Lane also may have been called.

Our next rector was John Carleton, D.D., Chaplain-in-Ordinary to the King, instituted in 1814 on the death of Mr. Wyatt. Dr. Carleton did not reign long, his passing bell was tolled in 1819, and the ringers had three shillings for tolling it. Two bells are used for passing bells in Theberton; for the greater is charged eighteenpence for an hour, and for the smaller, one shilling. For a rector, it seems to have been the custom to toll the greater bell for two hours.

In 1832 died the Rev. George Clarke Doughty of Theberton Hall; he had long survived his wife

[1] A tomb in the churchyard near the chancel door is inscribed to the memory of Samuel Jesup, who died in 1788 aged 23, and of William, son of Daniel Jesup, who died in 1796 aged 19.

Catherine heiress of the Brockford branch of the old family of Revett ; he was vicar of Hoxne and Denham, rector of Martlesham. This is extracted from a contemporary Norwich newspaper: "On Monday last the remains of the Rev. George Clarke Doughty were interred in the chancel of Hoxne Church. His loss will be long lamented by his numerous friends and connexions, to whom he was in the strictest sense the sincere friend, the good landlord, the kind patron of the poor, and the most philanthropic of men. The parish of Hoxne will long remember their old Pastor who acted as the friend, the brother and the adviser, of every inhabitant of the Parish."

George Clarke Doughty's great-grandfather, another George born in 1655, had also been rector of Martlesham. His quaint "Rules for a holy life" are in my possession, and it is evident from his letters that his own life was ruled by them.

These are the lines :—

Apparel sober, neat, comely,
Conversation little, honest, heavenly,
Diet temperate, convenient, frugal,
Manners grave, courteous, cheerful,
Prayers short, devout, frequent,
Recreations lawful, brief, seldom,
Sleep moderate, quiet, seasonable
Thoughts divine, awful, useful,
Will constant, ready, obedient,
Works profitable, holy, useful.

George Clarke Doughty inherited the estate of Martlesham Hall and the advowson of Martlesham rectory from his mother, heiress of the Goodwins of Martlesham.

The Rev. Thomas Strong M.A. was instituted to the Rectory of Theberton in 1819 on the death of Dr. Carleton.

About this time, we first find the name, Thomas Gibson, in our parish documents. The step-son of Mr. Wootton who died in 1844, he inherited Theberton House, and entered political life as Tory member for Ipswich. Later, having assumed the additional surname of Milner and joined the Liberal party, he became a member of Lord Palmerston's Cabinet of 1859 as President of the Board of Trade. Of Mr. Milner-Gibson, who was a good neighbour and a kind friend of the writer, one son survives, Mr. G. Milner-Gibson-Cullum of Hardwick House, near Bury St. Edmunds.

CHAPTER XVII

In 1820, John Pipe tolled the bell for the funeral of King George III. His trade of shoemaker was for a small village quite extensive, he employed some five or six journeymen. He seems to have kept school also. I find a bill of his among the parish documents: "to half a year's schooling £1. 18*s.* 6*d.*," which may perhaps have been the parish subscription on behalf of pauper children.

A bill dated 1822 was not at the first glance easy to interpret "To 3/4 day of myself and lad putting up pool on the steble oak plank for bottom of pool." One had to call to mind that there is a flagstaff upon our church tower.

"A bell for Majesty" was tolled on the death of King George IV. in 1830.

In that year, occurs the last account I have found with the item "Pd. Apparitor." It was high time indeed that those "moral police" of the Church of England should be disestablished and disendowed.

Some thatching to both church and chancel roofs, was done in 1830, we find payments by the parish, and by the Rector Mr. Strong respectively.

The Rev. Charles Montagu Doughty, son of George Clarke Doughty, held his first court for the manor of Theberton in 1834.

And a white stone should mark that year for the last perambulation of our parish—which an old friend of mine who died but a few years ago, could remember. It seems indeed to have been a most festive occasion. A certain Tom Waller was then mine host of the Lion. Of his name I retain a childish remembrance ; for our four church bells chimed, so we were told, "Come Tom Wal-ler, come Tom Wal-ler." Whether they brought him to church "regular" I cannot say. Here is Tom Waller's bill :

"The Parish of Theberton Dr. to Thomas Waller at the perambulation of the boundary of the above parish May 10 1834."

	s.	*d.*
Beer	8	8
Biscuits	2	6
12 to tea	18	0
16 ditto	16	0
Beer	11	0
Brandy	2	3
Brandy and water .	2	6
Gin and water . .	3	6
Rum and water . .	2	0
ditto and ditto . .	2	0
Beer and tobacco .	1	0
Mr. Smy day work.	7	6
2 leading men . .	4	0
	£3	18 11

Mr. Waller was not good at his addition, for the total is wrong by two shillings—against himself. Discreet obscurity veils the last two items. Was it Mr. Smy's well paid work, to pilot the procession through the intricacies of their perambulation? And the two leading men? Had they to lead the field, over the hedges and ditches? or was it their office, after the beer, the brandy, the gin, and the rum, had been imbibed, to lead the weaker brethren to their homes? It was a roaring day at all events for the Lion and for Mr. Waller.

Tom Waller must have been a jolly soul, with great power of social attraction. While he was innkeeper, our parish meetings were more thirsty than of old. In 1827 a "Churchwarding's meeting" drank 8*s.* 3*d.* worth of beer at the Lion. Sound stuff no doubt, bad for neither the heads nor feet of the parish fathers. £1 was spent, while he was still landlord, on a subsequent occasion.

Tied up with a bundle of bills endorsed "Churchwardens bills to Michaelmas 1835," I find a bill headed "Emigrant's expenses." The law was then that ratepayers could direct money to be raised to defray the expense of the emigration of poor persons settled in their parish, with consent of the Poor Law Board. This bill shows that the Act was brought into operation at Theberton, and that in no illiberal spirit; it ran thus:

Emigrant's expences

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Paid William Cable conveyance	1	1	0
Toll Gates		1	0
At Wangford eating and beer		2	0
At Lowestof . . . . do		1	0
Shop and flour bill	1	18	2
Carriage of luggage by coach		2	4
Butchers bill	1	19	2
Small cash and padlock		1	9
Baker's bill for bread and bags	1	10	0
Bill at the Bear Inn	2	0	10
Give Cable to buy liquors		5	0
Expenses at Gorleston day and night		4	6
Give Cable	4	0	0
The Captain for Cable	6	0	0
Mr. Preston for passage	10	0	0
Expenses coming home		5	0
Postage of a letter to and from Yarmouth		1	5
	£29	13	2

Cable seems to have been well provided. The shop, and flour bill, the butcher's and the baker's bills were

I suppose, for food on the voyage. He was given 5*s.* to buy liquors, besides £4 in cash, and the captain was entrusted with another £6, to be spent no doubt for his advantage. Where our emigrant went does not appear; wherever it was, may he have prospered. His escort seems to have made a blissful sojourn at the Bear Inn.

The church was visited by competent observers in 1836. The Davy MSS. mention that the structure had then lately been repaired, and the roof ceiled. The pulpit had been moved to the north side, near the eastward end of the nave.

We have the original faculty, dated 1837, authorizing the building of the little red brick school, which some of us can remember, upon a piece of the churchyard. The small room—only thirty-one by thirteen feet—served its modest purpose till 1871, when it was replaced by the present school, which I hope may long grow in usefulness. The words of the faculty show that the churchyard was then much larger than there was need for; yet, though the site of the old school was thrown back into it, a cemetery has had of late years to be provided, upon land given by the late Mr. Jasper Milner-Gibson.

The ignorance of our poor folk was formerly deplorable. Now, it may be that teaching is too ambitious, and tends to be superficial—too many subjects attempted; and the children leave school so young, that inevitably they forget most of what has been painfully taught them, so that teachers' time and talents and the overtaxed means of ratepayers produce no adequate results. But, in old days, things were much worse; there was nothing worthy of the name of education. Inefficient dames' schools afforded the sole opportunity to acquire even the sound foundation of the three R's. How few

could either read or write, is disclosed by our registers of marriages. From 1754 to 1781, I find that out of one hundred and forty-four persons married in Theberton, one hundred and five could not write their names; from 1781 to 1814, one hundred and thirty-nine persons out of two hundred and eight were unable to sign; from 1813 to 1836 out of one hundred and fifty-six persons, ninety-six were illiterate.[1]

In 1837, a wall was built on the south side of the churchyard—the wall which we have now. It cost, with foundations, coping, and the piers to the gate all told £27. 13*s*. 8½*d*. To meet this outlay, £30 was lent by John Ablett, the then tenant of the Church farm; to whom the repayment, with interest at 5 per cent. in annual instalments of £5, was secured by a promissory note of Henry Plant, a churchwarden. This document, endorsed with Mr. Ablett's receipts for all instalments, is in the parish box.

That year the bell was tolled again "for Majesty" —the death of King William IV.; marking also the accession of our late venerated Queen Victoria; and there is a charge for the needful alteration of the Liturgy.

The year 1838 brought a great change in relations between farmers and the parson. Not again was the rector or some one on his behalf, to enter the fields at harvest, and stick a green bough for a sign of ownership in each tenth stook or shock; no more would the tithe barn of the rector be stored with tithes in kind. Collection of those tithes had caused endless friction, not conducive to the good influence of clergymen, and now a better system was to be substituted. Under the provisions of the Tithe Act of 1836, an agreement was

[1] See also p. 158.

made between Mr. Strong as rector of Theberton, on the one part, and certain owners of not less than two-thirds of the titheable land in the parish on the other part; and by this statutory compact the tithes were commuted for a yearly rent charge of £430. 10*s*. How this sum of rent charge was arrived at, evidence might perhaps be raked out of the dust of some Government office, but I have not made any search for it. In cases not settled by agreement, the Act prescribed that the average value of the tithes for the seven years which ended at Christmas 1835, should be the basis of commutation. This principle may, or may not, have been adopted here. If it were, six out of the seven must have been bounteous years indeed, for assuming a terrier of 1834 to be reliable, the income from the tithes and glebe that year was no more than in 1820, viz., £200.

Looking back through preceding terriers and other documents available, for evidence of the value of the living, quite surprising are their discrepancies. We know that in the first year of Elizabeth, the value was assessed in the King's Books at £26. 13*s*. 4*d*. More than a century later in 1668, we have seen that John Hacket's petition stated the yearly value as "not above £70." In 1706, 1709, and 1716, Robert Wychingham's terriers put it at £30. In 1720, the living had under the Act of Anne been exempted from First Fruits, on the ground that it produced less than £50, viz. £31. 13*s*. 4*d*. In 1723, a terrier sets the value at £40. For 1725 and 1729, the terriers of Wychingham junior returned the old value of £30. Likewise that of Robert Hacon for 1735. In 1740, the value rose to £60. From 1747 to 1813 both inclusive, during incumbencies of Benjamin Taylor, James Benet, John Whittington, James Benet the second, and William Wyatt, their terriers repeat the

accustomed figure of £30. Yet, as it will be remembered, John Taylor—*alias* Orthodoxus—testified that in 1762, the Rectory was worth quite £200 a year. And in Bacon's edition of Liber Regis dated 1786, we find two figures of value, the one £31. 13*s.* 4*d.* plainly copied from the bishop's return under the Act of Anne—and the other £150, of which no explanation is given, but which must have been intended for the then actual value.[1] Again for 1808 and 1809, I find that Mr. Wyatt then rector, was assessed for property tax at £20—I think for glebe, and £240 for tithes.

Such is the evidence: the reader will form his own conclusion. My own view is, that terriers, as before said, used to be copied carelessly from each other; and that no reliance can be placed upon them. This view is strengthened by another consideration. During the £30 terrier period, at all events from 1748 to 1813, a regular succession of curates in charge represented non-resident rectors. Following poor Orthodoxus, who starved on £20 a year, came S. Foster, W. Smith, N. E. Smith, W. Bradley, D. E. Davey, W. Cole, C. Brown, and F. H. Groom. That such a poor milch cow as a living of £30 a year, could supply its rectors with cream worth the skimming, and their curates with skim milk enough to keep them alive, is quite incredible. We may, I think, believe the evidence of John Hacket; of "Orthodoxus"; of the Liber Regis; and of the assessment of 1808; and discard the tales of the terriers as utterly untrustworthy.

As to the period after 1813, terriers tell us that in 1820 the yearly income was £200; in 1834 the same; in 1835 Lewis' Topographical Dictionary gives the net in-

[1] I have to thank my friend Mr. Herbert M. F. White for kind assistance here.

come as £354; and in 1838, the tithes were commuted we know, for £430. 10*s*. With regard to the rise from £150 in 1786, to £200 in 1820—if we may accept the former figure—it is explainable by the fact that, though the enclosure award had then not yet been published, new tithes were created by the operation of the Enclosure and the Drainage Acts. As to the jump from £200 to £354, and thence to the commutation value £430. 10*s*.: "that I must leave," as we say in Suffolk. I have no explanation to offer.

The Commutation Agreement sets out the same customs of titheing as are recorded in the survey of 1754. They of course went the way of tithes in kind, and after 1838 ceased to be payable.

In 1841, the Rev. Henry Hardinge was instituted to the Rectory on the resignation of Mr. Strong; he was a man of cultured taste, an accomplished linguist, and author of a poem "The Creation" published in 1863; he had for some years been curate for Mr. Strong, in charge of the parish. The bad system of pluralist parsons and poor starveling curates, was not to endure much longer; but so late as 1837, there were still no less than five hundred non-resident beneficed clergy—Mr. Strong among them—in this diocese of Norwich.

Two alms plates or patens which he presented to the church keep Mr. Strong's name in our remembrance.

This year saw the erection of a gallery supported by wooden arches, across the west end of the church, in place of the former platform. I find only one bill relating to this work, dated 1841: "to George Ward for building the gallery, £10."

The baptism of the present writer is registered in 1841; and in 1843 the register records the baptism of his brother Charles Montagu Doughty, author of

THEBERTON HALL.

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"Arabia Deserta" and "The Dawn in Britain"; and also the burial of their mother, Frederica Doughty, daughter of the Hon. and Rev. Frederick Hotham, then rector of Dennington.

The Davy MSS. describe the church in the year 1848. Pews then nearly filled the chancel, but the nave had been re-seated, and the aisle completely restored by my father, at a cost of nearly £2,000. The author of the MSS. noted with some disapproval the stencilled walls and pillars of the aisle. He did not know, perhaps, that Mr. Cottingham the eminent church architect, had but followed a practice of the period to which the aisle belongs. There are original examples in England and in some ancient churches of North Germany which I have seen. The gallery was not touched at this time; remaining till Mr. Bradstreet succeeded to the Rectory on the death of Mr. Hardinge; it was removed, I think, in 1866. Afterwards, an organ, and a choir of good intentions, supplanted the "company of singers."

There was granted in 1846, a faculty for seats in the then restored aisle, to compensate Mr. Doughty for "the ancient pews which had belonged to his Hall by prescriptive right." My father did not live long after his work of restoration; he died in 1850.

The pulpit had been moved, I think, during these works; it had undergone former migrations in 1822, and in 1841. In 1882, it was proposed once more to remove it, and I remember well, how at a vestry meeting we all laughed at the suggestion of a worthy churchwarden that it be put upon casters; he had, he told us, known three Reverends, and each wanted it in a different place. If it had been upon casters, they might have pleased themselves, without expense to the parish.

Till about half way through last century, one interesting custom still held its own among us at Theberton—the gleaning bell. Blackstone's opinion was, that the Common Law of England allowed the poor to enter on any man's ground to glean after harvest. That opinion was over-ruled by legal decision, but the practice held on under kindly favour of the farmers. It happens that many parish bills of the time have been preserved; and they show that, from 1815 to 1849, a gleaning bell was paid for every year. It was rung for two or three weeks, according to circumstances; in 1815, for instance, "from 12th August at Mr. Heath's, to 31st at Mr. Ablett's." I think that at one time all persons belonging to our parish, and perhaps also outsiders, after sound of the morning bell, were at liberty to glean where they pleased, but that latterly this licence was restricted, and each farm became a preserve for the families of the men employed on it. At the present time, self-binding and reaping machines, and horse rakes following close behind the wagons, leave but few ears upon the ground; and, moreover, the price of corn has not for many years been high enough to attract the women—now, happily, so much better to do—to a petticoat harvest in the fields.

The following lines I quote from a little volume—"Suffolk Largess," kindly given to me, soon after it appeared in 1865, by the author. He was a police-constable stationed at Theberton, who preferred to veil his identity under the pseudonym of "Quill." Our good old Suffolk speech is fairly well rendered:—

(Morning)

Why! listen, yow be quiet, bo'—the bell is tolling eight
Why don't yow mind what you're about? We're allers kind o' late!

Now Mary, get that mawther dressed—oh dear! how slow yow fare
There come a lot o' gleaners now. Maw, don't stand gawkin' there!

. . . . . .

(Evening)
Dear me! there goo the bell agin—'tis seven I declare
And we don't fare to have got none :—the gleaning now don't fare
To be worth nothin'; but I think—as far as I can tell
We'll try a coomb somehow to scratch, if we be live and well.

And now my work may end. The story of nearly eight centuries has been brought down to 1850, within old people's memories. Some day perhaps, another pen may care to carry on these simple Chronicles of Theberton.

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A FEW NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

By the Rev. PROFESSOR SKEAT

I TRUST I may be allowed to add a few notes, on my own account, upon a few points which have come under my special notice.

With regard to the footnote on p. 2, I do not feel sure that I have expressed myself clearly. I mean that the present name of Theberton has resulted from the old name by regular changes, and in this sense has been preserved. The pronunciation of Thēod-beorhtes tūn can only be fully appreciated by such as have learnt a little Anglo-Saxon. Thēod-beorht is composed of two elements; the former, "thēod," means "people," and the latter means "bright." Most of our old names are thus strangely compounded. Each element must have its meaning; but the whole compound is usually nonsensical. A large number of Old English Christian names still survive as surnames; and Thēodbeorht is the source of the modern Tebbut, Tebbott, Tebbit, and Tibbert.

At p. 31 occurs "le Packeway." The word "pack" is first recorded in 1225. The word "pedder" is derived from "ped," which meant "a basket," and is equivalent to "pedlar"; they hawked things (originally fish) about in baskets. The Latin "pedes" could only have yielded "peder"; so that Weever's guess is impossible.

At p. 99, the best edition of Tusser is noted as being that of 1812. A newer edition was printed for the English Dialect Society in 1878, with notes and a glossary; it leaves little to be desired.

At p. 130, the passage is as follows: "Qui alteri dederit liquorem in quo mus vel mustela fuerint submersi, si secularis homo sit, tres dies jejunet; si monasticus sit, trecentos psalmos cantet."—

Confessionale Ecgberti, § 40. This Ecgbert was Archbishop of York. The Confessionale is printed in Thorpe's Ancient Laws, vol. ii.

A "whitteritt," at p. 130, is the same as a "whitrack," otherwise called a "whutthroat," *i.e.*, white-throat. "Whitrack" means "white neck," from "rack," a neck. See Whitrack and Rack in the English Dialect Dictionary. The throat of the weasel is white.

At p. 142, there is no difficulty as to "a payre of uppbodyes." It means a pair of stays, to keep the bodies up.

P. 163, note. The wood-wale is the green woodpecker; see the English Dialect Dictionary. It is so explained in my Glossary to Chaucer.

Where the Suffolk man says "an alpe," meaning a bull-finch, the Shropshire man says "a nope," shifting the *n* from the article to the substantive. The origin is unknown, but "alpe" is certainly the older form.

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